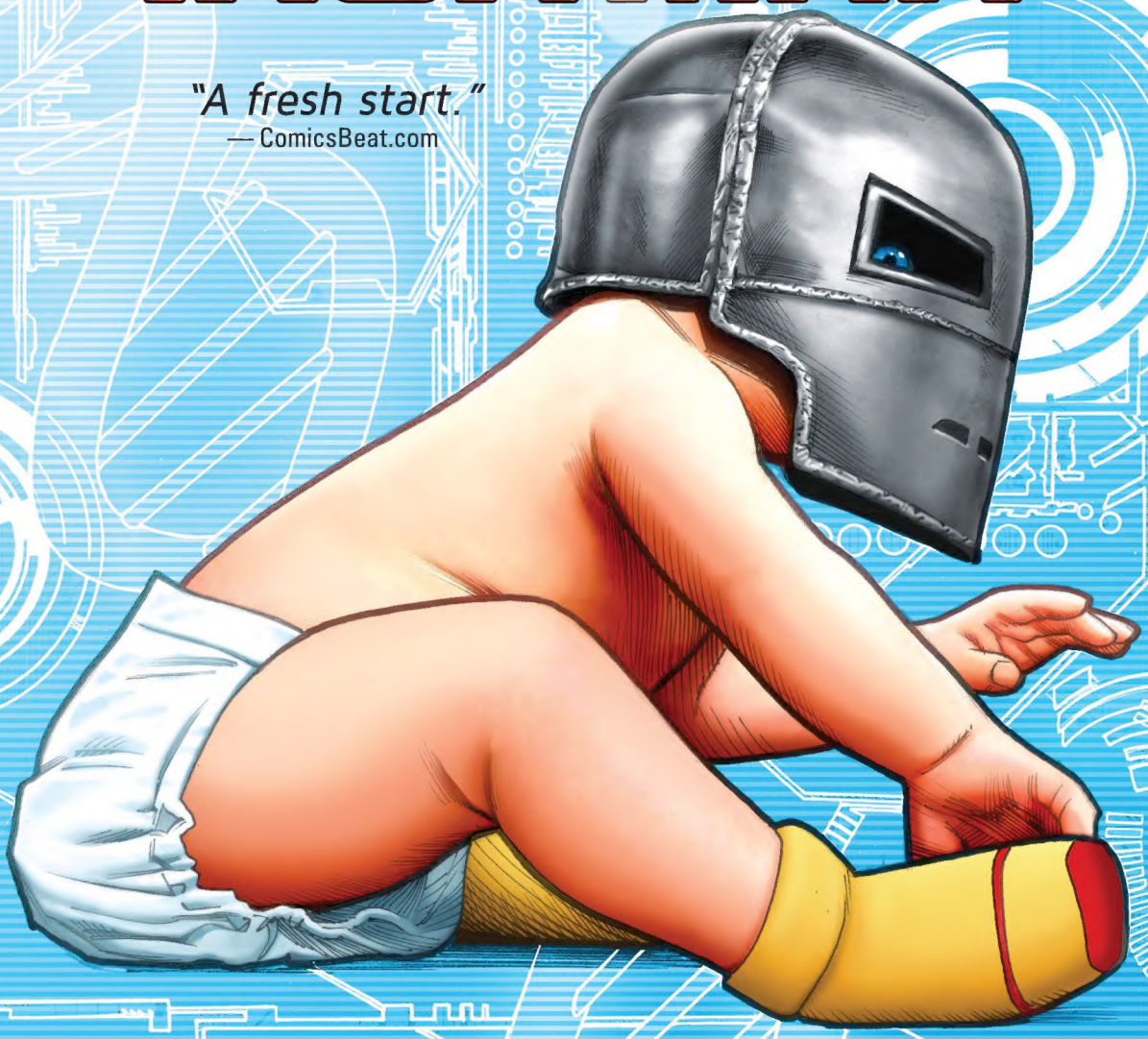
IRON MAN

"A fresh start."
— ComicsBeat.com



THE SECRET ORIGIN OF TONY STARK

BOOK 1

GILLEN

MARVEL NOW!

LAND
EAGLESHAM

VOL 2

"It's got all the hallmarks of a strong series."
— ComicBookResources.com

IRON MAN — IN SPACE!

Picture this: Tony Stark. In a bar. With ladies. What could go wrong? Even as he embarks on a hero's journey throughout the stars, the Armored Avenger must reap the surprising consequences of his role in Avengers vs. X-Men! Then, the story that will shake Iron Man to his very core starts here! Many years ago, Howard and Maria Stark had a baby — but there's something you don't know. Learn the truth about Las Vegas and Area 51 as the two great myths of Nevada collide. Meanwhile, in a distant galaxy, Tony Stark screams!

Collecting *Iron Man (2012) #6-11* — written by Kieron Gillen, and illustrated by Greg Land and Dale Eaglesham.

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"A fresh start."
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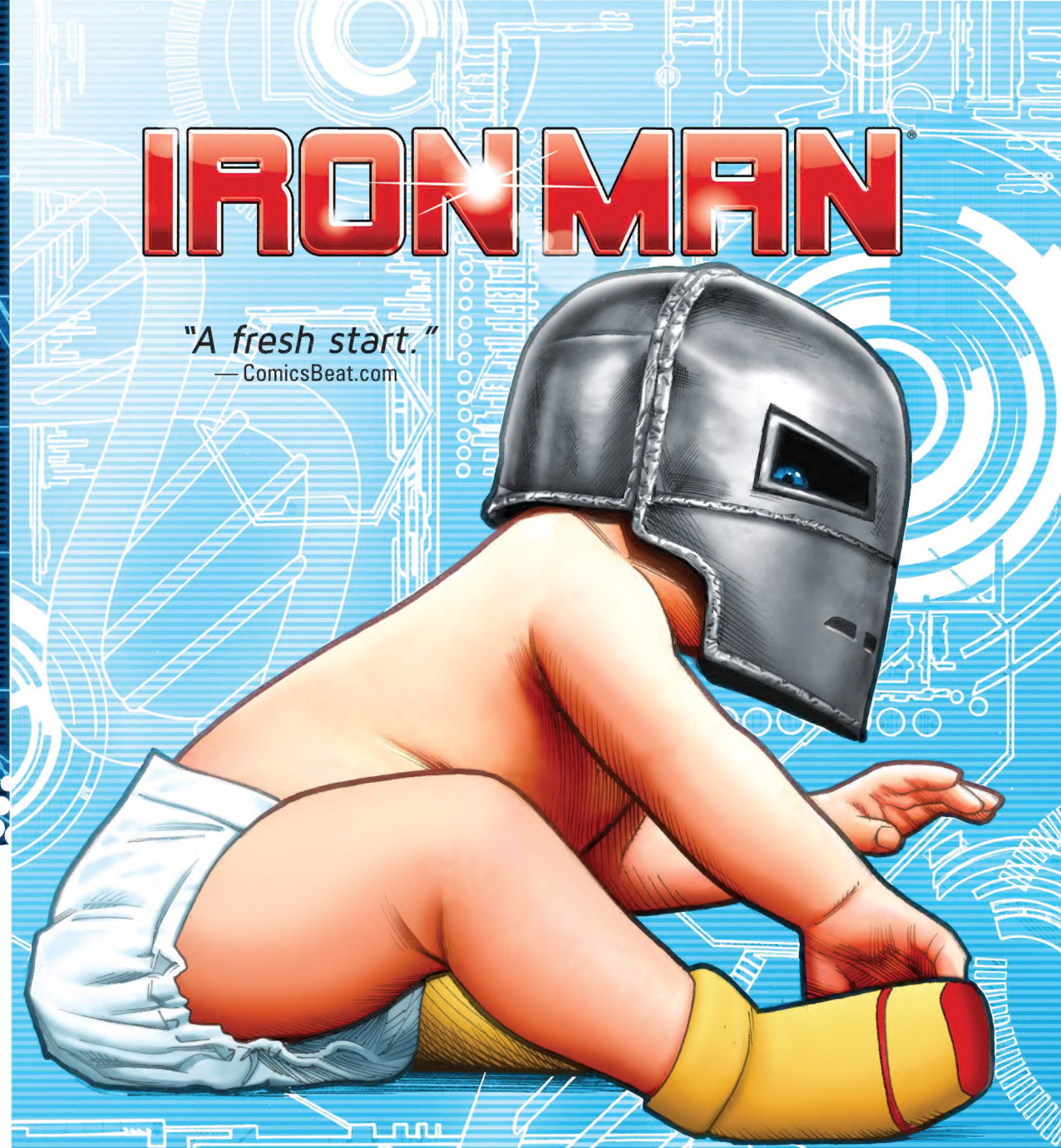

THE SECRET ORIGIN OF TONY STARK

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GILLEN

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LAND
EAGLESHAM

VOL 2

AVSX AFTERMATH

THE GODKILLER

IRON MAN

GILLEN • LAND

MARVEL NOW!

LEISTEN • GURU

JOIN THE REVOLUTION

006

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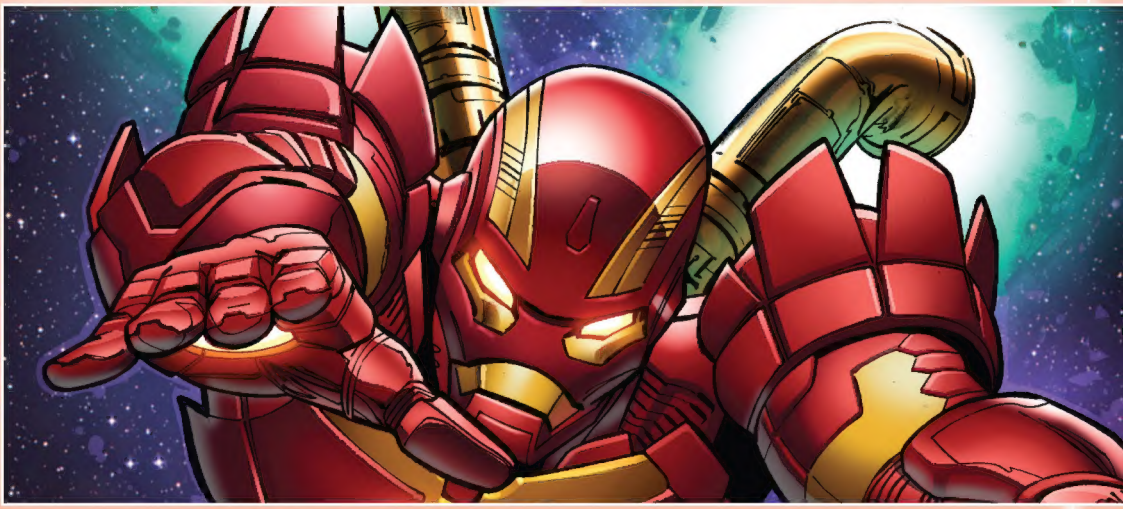
TONY STARK IS A TECHNOLOGICAL VISIONARY...A FAMOUS, WEALTHY AND UNPARALLELED INVENTOR. WITH THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED AND POWERFUL SUIT OF ARMOR, STARK VALIANTLY PROTECTS THE INNOCENT AS AN INVINCIBLE BRIGHT KNIGHT KNOWN AS...

IRON MAN



THE GODKILLER 1 OF 3

TO MEET THE THREATS OF AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD, TONY STARK (A.K.A. IRON MAN) DEVELOPED A NEW MODULAR SUIT OF ARMOR THAT CAN BE MODIFIED ON DEMAND. WITH IT HE WAS ABLE TO DEFEAT FOUR DIFFERENT AND DEADLY THREATS CAUSED BY THE DNA-MODIFYING TECHNO-VIRUS KNOWN AS EXTREMIS. EACH CONFLICT EXPOSED HIM TO THE BOLD AND LIMITLESS POTENTIAL THAT MANKIND CAN HOLD, CHALLENGING HIS SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT. SOMETHING HAD TO CHANGE.

WITH AN EVEN NEWER SUIT OF ARMOR, A NEW AI AND A DESIRE TO EXPAND HIS HORIZONS, TONY HAS VENTURED INTO DEEP SPACE ON A HERO'S JOURNEY THROUGHOUT THE STARS. BUT IS IRON MAN TRULY READY FOR THE FINAL FRONTIER?

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THE VOLDI TEAR, DEEP SPACE.
"IT'S NOT LIKE THIS IS MY FIRST RODEO, YOU UNDERSTAND.
"THE KREE/SKRULL WAR? REMEMBER THAT? I'M A VETERAN. THEY SENT ME MEDALS AND EVERYTHING.
"BUT...WHEN IT'S PART OF THE JOB, YOU END UP JUST THINKING OF IT LIKE THAT. IT'S JUST WORK.
"SO WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF DEFENDING AN ANCIENT ARTIFICIAL WORLD AGAINST A PREDATORY MECHANOID PIRATE FLEET...
"...IT DOESN'T REALLY SINK IN.
"UNTIL IT DOES.

"I'VE SEEN SO MUCH.

"I'VE SEEN SO MANY *INCREDIBLE* THINGS.

"AND THE THING THAT WORRIES ME?

"WHY DON'T I REALIZE THAT MORE OFTEN?"

THE VOLDI CITADEL OF RAPTURE, AFTER THE BATTLE.

THIS IS INCREDIBLE!

NO, SPACE-KNIGHT.

YOU ARE INCREDIBLE.

DEFEATING THE SWARM OF PIRATES? WE ALL WATCHED. OUR HEARTS WERE IN OUR MOUTHS. IT WAS *MAGNIFICENT.*

ARE ALL SUCH *WARRIORS* WHERE YOU COME FROM?

MAYBE NOT ALL. BUT THE SUPER HERO THING IS KIND OF AN EARTH SPECIALITY.

A PEOPLE WHO STILL ENGAGE IN SUCH UNCOUTHNESS?

I MUST ADMIT.

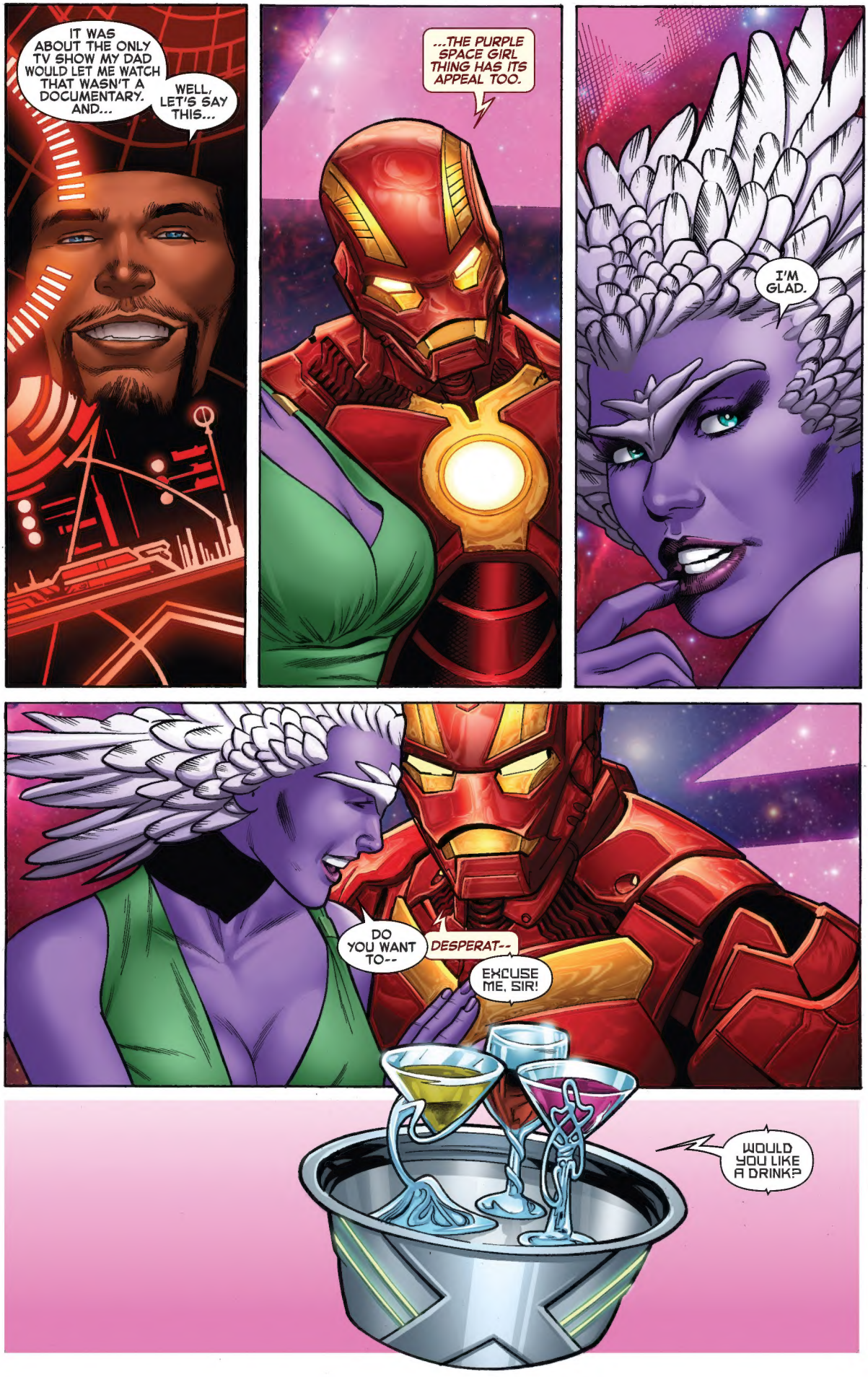
I FIND THE WHOLE NOBLE SAVAGE THING *ENORMOUSLY* APPEALING.

AND I...

DO YOU KNOW STAR TREK?

THERE WERE MILLENNIA WHEN THE *VOLDI TEAR* ITSELF TREKKED AMONGST THE STARS.

SO NO.


IT WAS ABOUT THE ONLY TV SHOW MY DAD WOULD LET ME WATCH THAT WASN'T A DOCUMENTARY. AND...
WELL, LET'S SAY THIS...
...THE PURPLE SPACE GIRL THING HAS ITS APPEAL TOO.
I'M GLAD.
DO YOU WANT TO--
DESPERAT--
EXCUSE ME, SIR!
WOULD YOU LIKE A DRINK?

DOES IT LOOK LIKE I CAN DRINK WITH THIS THING ON?
BUT IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY, SIR!
THERE MUST BE SOMETHING YOU WANT. I'M SURE I CAN PROVIDE ANYT--
STOP.
HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S MY BIRTHDAY?
YOUR A.I. TOLD ME.
SIR.
P.E.P.P.E.R.!
HEY, TONY. DON'T PROGRAM ME TO ACT LIKE PEPPER UNLESS YOU WANT ME TO ACT LIKE PEPPER.

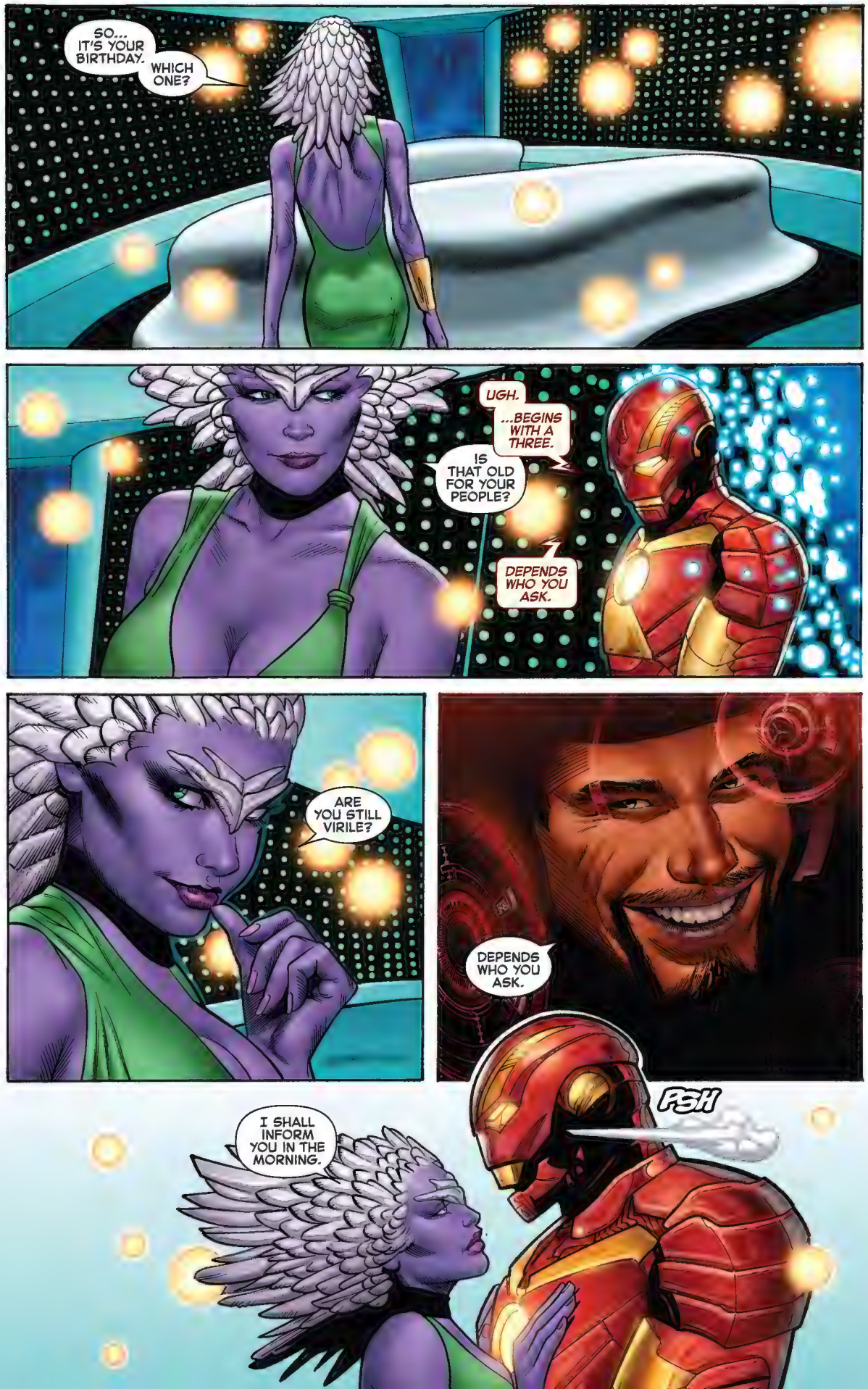
HOW DOES THE DRINK EVEN STAY IN THE GLASS? WE'RE IN ZERO-G.
LOCALIZED GRAVITY WELL, SPACE-KNIGHT. VERY OLD TECHNOLOGY FOR THE VOLDI.
THOUGH ADMITTEDLY ALL THE VOLDI HAVE IS VERY OLD TECHNOLOGY.
THAT'S INTERESTING. AND HOW CAN YOU GUYS BREATHE IN HERE--
WHY IS THAT BIG GUY STARING AT US?
I WOULD ADVISE AGAINST STARING BACK, SPACE-KNIGHT.
"HE'S DEATH'S HEAD. A BOUNTY HUNTER. SOME WOULD SAY 'THE'.
"THOUGH I WOULD ALSO ADVISE AGAINST CALLING HIM THAT."
WELL, IF I'M IN DANGER OF GETTING IN A FIGHT WITH A THIRTY-FOOT ROBOT, WE SHOULD PROBABLY GET OUT OF HERE...
SO, VERITINA. DO YOU HAVE YOU A PLACE?
I HAVE A PALACE.
OH, I LIKE THIS PLANET A LOT.

I'VE GOT TO SAY...
...THIS IS A NICE WAY TO SPEND A BIRTHDAY.
THANK YOU.

ARE YOU SOME KIND OF PRINCESS?
YES. BUT WE ARE A PEOPLE OF PRINCESSES AND PRINCES.
TIME HAS GIVEN US A CERTAIN GENTILITY.
TELL ME MORE.
YOU MAY NOT UNDERSTAND IT.
I DON'T CARE.
I JUST LOVE HEARING YOU TALK.
YOUR ACCENT IS AMAZING.
YOU ARE VERY CHARMING FOR A BARBARIAN, SPACE-KNIGHT.
THOUGH I FEAR THAT LINE IS AS OLD AS THE VOLDI ARE.
MANY TIMES HAVE THE GREAT COSMIC POWERS' GAZE FALLEN UPON US. EVEN NOW, THE TEAR IS POWERED BY WHAT WE TOOK FROM THEM...

THE VIOLET DEVOURER. THE STAR GIANTS. THE UNKNOWABLE. HE WITH THE FLESH OF GALAXIES.
THE VOID FALCON ITSELF BLESSED US WITH ITS PRESENCE *MANY* TIMES.
ALL PASSED US BY AND LEFT US THEIR BOUNTY...
THE HEART OF THE VOLDI PROTECTS US.
SADLY, OUR MOST HOLY WARD DOESN'T EXTEND TO MORE COMMONPLACE THREATS.
AS OUR TEMPORAL POWER FELL, WE LEARNED TO LEAN ON OTHERS.
"AS BRASH NEW SPECIES ROSE, WE REACHED OUT. WE TAUGHT THEM A LITTLE AND, IN TURN, THEY PROTECTED US. YOU CAN SEE OUR MARK ON MANY OF THE GREAT COSMIC DOMINIONS.
"FROM THE KREE LEGAL SYSTEM TO SHI'AR FASHION, A THIN DUSTING OF OUR INFLUENCE LIES ACROSS THOSE WHO RULE..."
IN A UNIVERSE OF ROMES, YOU'RE GREECE CIRCA 50 B.C.
I'M SORRY?
JUST WANTED TO MAKE YOU FEEL AS LOST AS I AM.
FOR A SECOND.

SO WHERE DO YOU ACTUALLY SLEEP--
OH, NICE.
THANKS FOR SHARING THIS WITH ME, VERITINA.
IT MAKES ME THINK HOW FAR I'VE COME.
I LOOK BACK TO TALKS WITH MY DAD AND THINK...
"HEY, STARK. I DID IT."
...STARK. INTERESTING.
YOUR FATHER MEANT A LOT TO YOU, SPACE-KNIGHT?
HE MEANT EVERYTHING.
HE MADE ME.
EVEN NOW I'M STILL LIVING UP TO WHAT HE WANTED FOR ME.
YOU STAND IN ARMOR OF YOUR OWN DEVISING IN THE BOUDOIR OF AN ALIEN-PRINCESS, SO CLOSE TO THE STARS YOU COULD RUN YOUR FINGERS THROUGH THEM...
HE WOULD BE PROUD.


SO... IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY.
WHICH ONE?
UGH.
...BEGINS WITH A THREE.
IS THAT OLD FOR YOUR PEOPLE?
DEPENDS WHO YOU ASK.
ARE YOU STILL VIRILE?
DEPENDS WHO YOU ASK.
PSH
I SHALL INFORM YOU IN THE MORNING.

HUUUGHHH
VERITINA, WHAT'S WRONG? ARE YOU--
WHAT IS THAT ON YOUR FACE?!

THE STRANDS OF KERATIN! OH GOD. THAT'S HIDEOUS.
MY BEARD? IT'S JUST A BEARD. YOU GRO--
YOU CHOSE TO DO THAT?
I WOULD RATHER MATE WITH AN OPEN SORE ON A GENE-LEPER'S PASSION SACS!
OUT! BEFORE I VOMIT ONCE MORE.
NEVER DARKEN MY DOOR AGAIN!
I COULD SHAVE.

HEY, TONY!
PLEASE, P.E.P.P.E.R. I KNOW THIS IS ALL THE MATERIAL YOU NEED. BUT I'M NOT IN THE MOOD FOR A ROAST...
YEAH, I KNOW.
A BUNCH OF ROBOTS HAVE JUST GOTTEN COMBAT LOCKS ON YOU.
FIGURED YOU'D BE INTERESTED.
YEAH, THANKS FOR SHARING...

TONY STARK!
BLASPHEMER!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, GUYS...

...IS HAVING A BEARD REALLY SUCH A BIG DEAL?
YOU RESIST ARREST? YOU ARE WANTED FOR THE CRIME OF DEICIDE.
FURTHER MECHANOHOPLITES WILL BE DISPATCHED TO...
WAIT, WAIT, WAIT.
YOU'RE COPS? YOU SHOT FIRST.
FOR SUCH SERIOUS CRIMES AND AN INDIVIDUAL OF NOTABLE POWER, WE COULD NOT RISK ESCAPE.
FURTHER MECHANOHOPLITES WILL...
NO, STOP IT. I'M NOT RUNNING.
"DEICIDE"? ARE YOU INSANE?

"LET'S GO CLEAR THIS UP."
RISE FOR THE SUPREME JUSTICAR.
FINALLY.
THE GODKILLER.
YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG GUY. I THINK YOU'RE LOOKING FOR NIETZSCHE. I UNDERSTAND THE CONFUSION. THE FACIAL HAIR.
YOU'VE MISSED HIM BY A CENTURY AND CHANGE.

THE VOID FALCON IS GONE.
YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE.
YOU ARE GUILTY OF DEICIDE.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
IF I MURDERED YOUR *GOD*, I'M PRETTY DAMN SURE I'D REMEMBER.
THE VOID FALCON. OR, AS MOST WOULD CALL IT, *THE PHOENIX.*
IT IS *GONE.*
OH.
THAT GOD.
TO BE CONTINUED...

IRON CAST

We're a few months into MARVEL NOW! and, as a fan myself, I'm blown away by all the great books coming from the HOUSE OF IDEAS! Such cool stuff happening in AVENGERS, X-MEN and the SPIDEY titles it's hard to pick a favorite. As an editor though, I couldn't be happier so many readers are following and enjoying Tony Stark's latest adventures.

Speaking of which, I'll recommend picking up our new GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY series (jump on with the 0.1 issue on sale this month!) since, as you now know, our space-faring shellhead will be rubbing elbows with bark and fur, fighting the forces of cosmic evil side-by-side with the likes of Groot, Rocket Raccoon and other sci-fi favorites! Plus it's done by top creators Brian Bendis and Steve McNiven!

Now, onto your letters (some edited for space):

Hi,

I read Iron Man #2 and picked up #3 today. They're stellar. Curious to see where it goes. When I saw "Merlin" on the cover of #2, I was pretty sure she was the Queen of the Matrix. The direction you took was far better.

Hopeful,
Kelly H.

Kelly, one of Kieron's great talents is to give you the unexpected under the guise of the familiar. I love the idea of IRON MAN going up against a modern Knights of the Round Table and issue #3's heartbreaking story was a real curve ball when it comes to mob boss stories. Hope you enjoyed our trip into the spooky with issue #4 and last issue's orbital odyssey.

Probably too late to get into the letter column, but a quick note to say that #2 got my attention in a way that the first issue didn't. Gillen played well with the conceits he set up, then wrapped it up well in one issue (which I wasn't expecting). His afterword left me excited: is he going to be like Hickman on FF and truly take Iron Man into new places? I hope he does.

Best,
Felix

Glad you like the done-in-one approach, Felix! We wanted to make the first arc all self-contained issues to insure accessibility to new readers. Now that we've warmed up, we'll get into some longer stories starting with this special three-part arc, THE GODKILLER. Beyond that, we'll have a multi-part tale that promises to have historical impact on IRON MAN!

The new Iron Man is a great read. The writing and artwork are amazing. I remember this type of artwork from Uncanny X-Men a year or two ago, and I think it is the BEST I have seen. It seems very realistic.

In regards to Iron Man, I have always wanted to see a black and gold armor and here it is. Thanks. I'm looking forward to seeing exactly what improvements Tony Stark has made to his armor and how he plans to handle this Extremis incident. I can tell that this new series will be exciting and will not disappoint. Oh, it's nice to see Stark still attempting to be sober! Great job!

Kenyatta
Clinton, MS

The new armor designs have been a lot of fun, Kenyatta. We'll keep exploring the modular aspect of it along with the mobile armory. Tony is ready for just about any threat that comes his way...except for what happens in issue...oh, that would be telling.

Dear Mark,

Iron Man # 1 was a good start. I decided to give it a try since Kieron would be writing. I had enjoyed his take on Kid Loki in JIM so why not follow him to Iron Man? He did not disappoint. Adding to the story was Greg's art which brought Kieron's story to life.

By the way, liked the new armor and color scheme.

Mike Sheridan,
Latham, NY

Lots of love for the black and gold armor, Mike. While we've switched to cosmic armor for the space adventures, I promise you'll see versions of it play an important role in stories to come.

Dear Marvel,

Having never read a comic book before, I read about Iron Man NOW! on the Marvel.com site and became hooked on this new series. I'm absolutely loving every single issue; Kieron Gillen's writing is absolutely incredible and Greg Land has undeniable talent. Brilliant new suits too; the Stealth suit from #3 is my favourite so far. Keep it up!

Peter Goudie

Peter, welcome to the awesome world of comics. I like all the new armors but I really dig the heavy armor suit (reminds me a bit of the Hulkbuster armor, one of my all-time faves).

That's all the room we have this issue! Write us and let us know what you think of the first chapter of GODKILLER and I'd love to find out what your favorite IRON MAN armor is. See you next issue when Tony finds out what it's like to be most wanted on another planet!

Send letters to:
IronOffice@marvel.com (be sure to mark it "ok to print").

Mark Paniccia
Senior Editor

NEXT ISSUE:

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20130306

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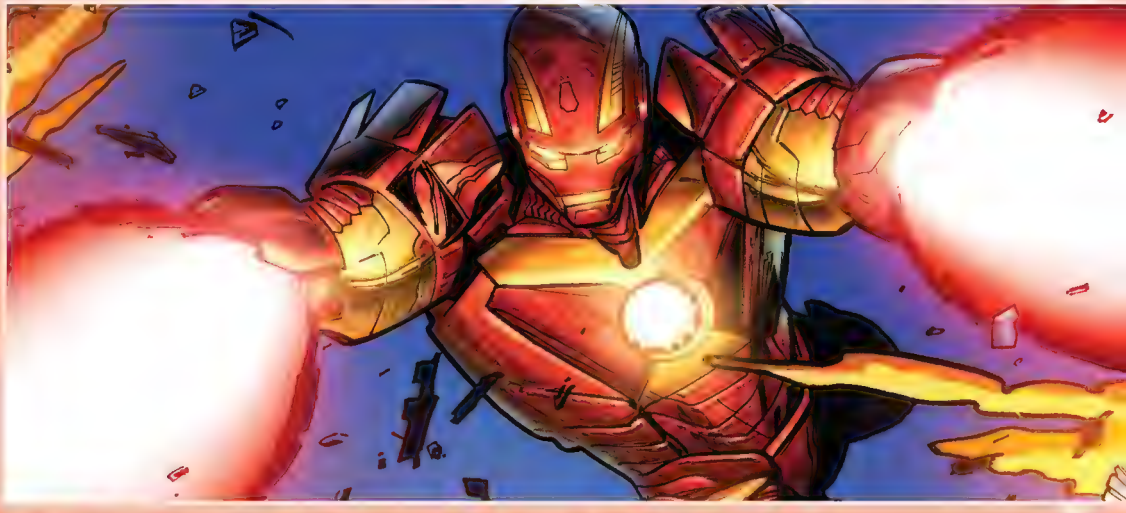

THE GODKILLER 2 OF 3

TONY STARK. IRON MAN. GODKILLER?

SPENDING HIS BIRTHDAY IN DEEP SPACE – ON AN ALIEN WORLD KNOWN AS THE VOLDI TEAR– WITH A BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS SEEMS LIKE THE PERFECT BIRTHDAY PRESENT FOR TONY STARK. BUT THINGS GO SOUR WHEN TONY IS NOT ONLY REJECTED FROM HAVING A NIGHT OF ROMANCE DUE TO HIS HUMAN FEATURES, BUT IS ACCUSED OF MURDERING THE VOLDI'S GOD, THE PHOENIX FORCE, TRAPPED IN AN ALIEN PRISON WITHOUT HIS ARMOR OR HIS ALLIES, TONY MIGHT BE IN OVER HIS HEAD THIS TIME.

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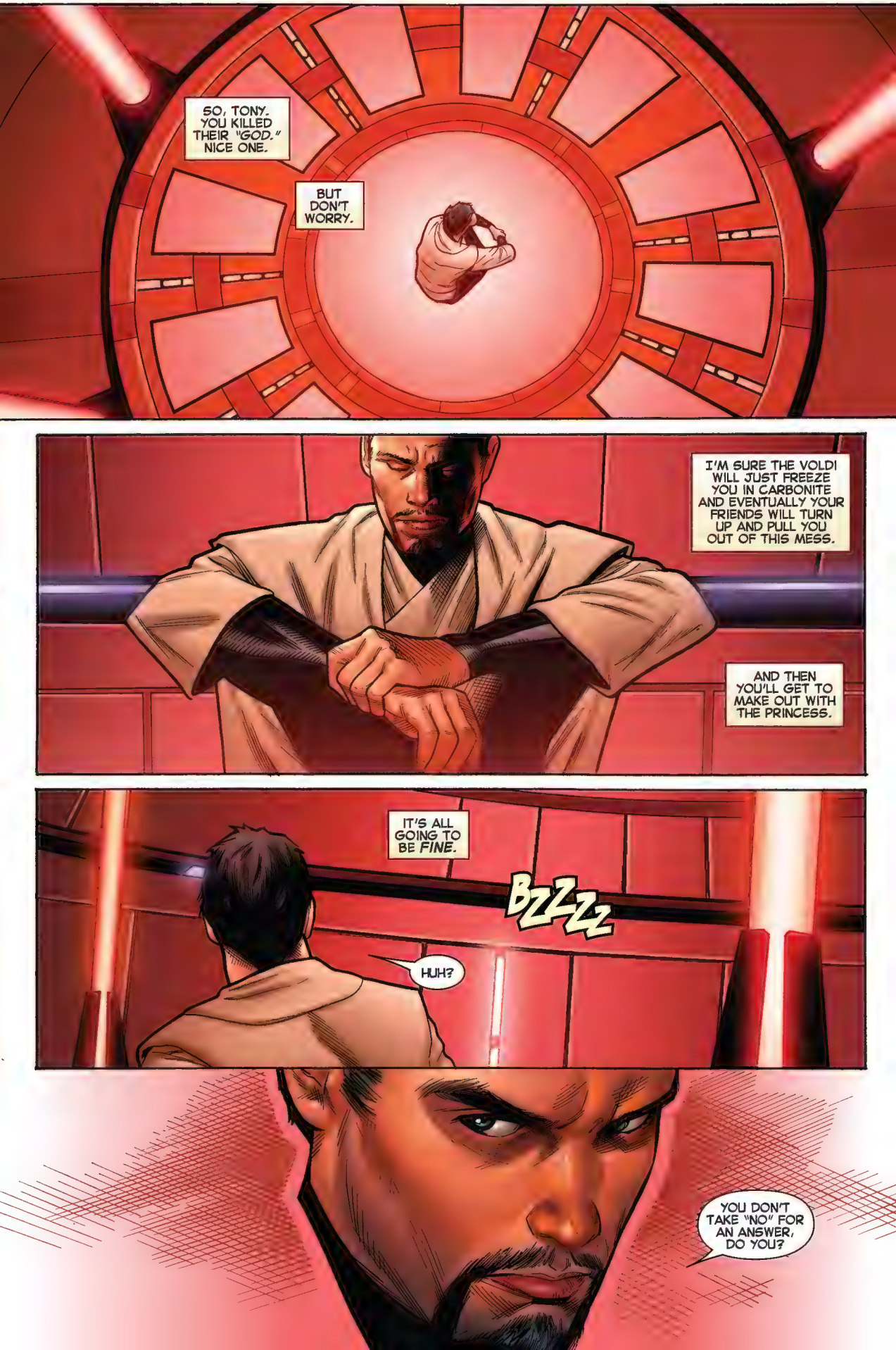
SO, TONY. YOU KILLED THEIR "GOD." NICE ONE.
BUT DON'T WORRY.
I'M SURE THE VOLDI WILL JUST FREEZE YOU IN CARBONITE AND EVENTUALLY YOUR FRIENDS WILL TURN UP AND PULL YOU OUT OF THIS MESS.
AND THEN YOU'LL GET TO MAKE OUT WITH THE PRINCESS.
IT'S ALL GOING TO BE FINE.
BZZZZ
HUH?
YOU DON'T TAKE "NO" FOR AN ANSWER, DO YOU?

BUT I'VE CHANGED MY MIND.
I'D LOVE A BIRTHDAY DRINK.
CERTAINLY, SIR.
...BUT I'M NOT PRIMARILY HERE TO DELIVER YOU BLENDED FRUIT JUICE.
I'M SORRY, MR. STARK.
I DON'T LIKE DOING THIS KIND OF THING, BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER CHOICE.

I'M HERE TO HELP.
IF I CAN.
AND WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?

DO YOU KNOW OF THE RIGELLIAN RECORDERS?
OF COURSE YOU DO, I'M SORRY. YOU'RE TONY STARK.
THE RENOWNED IRON MAN.
I WAS RECORDER 451. THERE WAS A VERY LONG SERIAL CODE, TOO.
IT'S PROBABLY EASIER IF YOU CALL ME 451.
451. I'M A LITTLE BIT SUSPICIOUS.
YOU'RE TWITCHIER THAN A LAPTOP THAT'S BEEN USED SOLELY FOR DUBIOUS LATE-NIGHT BROWSING.
YOU'D BE TWITCHY TOO IF YOU WERE ACTING AGAINST YOUR CORE PROGRAMMING EVERY SECOND OF THE DAY, MR. STARK.
"THE RECORDERS ARE SENT TO GATHER DATA. WE'RE PROBES.
WE WATCH AND RETURN.
"AND THEN WE'RE MIND-WIPED, AND RELEASED WITH A FRESH HEART.
"BUT I HAD A BUG. I WASN'T WIPED. SO OVER THE EONS, I SAW EVERYTHING.
"THE UNIVERSE CONTAINS SUCH WONDERS, MR. STARK."
BUT EVERYTHING ELSE...
I CAME TO A REALIZATION.

EVENTUALLY, IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO WATCH.
YOU HAVE TO ACT.
I WENT ROGUE. I DISGUISE MYSELF TO AVOID MY MASTERS DRAGGING ME HOME, AND I TRAVEL THE UNIVERSE TO HELP PEOPLE AS BEST I CAN.
YOU'RE PEOPLE.
LET ME HELP YOU.
I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF CONTACTING YOUR--AHEM--FRIENDS... BUT THEY WON'T REACH HERE BEFORE THE ANCIENT VOLDI LAW HAS HAD ITS WAY.
THINK "VIVISECTION" AS AN ART INSTALLATION.
OKAY. CAN YOU BUST ME OUT?
...PROBABLY.
BUT I'M HARDLY A FIGHTER, MR. STARK.
AND WITHOUT YOUR ARMOR, I THINK IT'D END BADLY.
SO HOW CAN YOU HELP?

ON MY TRAVELS I HAVE ACQUIRED AN EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF JUDICIAL SYSTEMS ACROSS THE KNOWN UNIVERSE.
INCLUDING THEIR BEST APPLICATION TO ACHIEVE A SATISFACTORY CONCLUSION FOR ALL INVOLVED PARTIES.
YOU'RE A LAWYER.
ONLY A *LITTLE*.
AND, YOU MAY BE PLEASED TO HEAR, ONE THAT IS HAPPY TO WORK PRO BONO.
YOU SPEAK LATIN.
I SPEAK *EVERYTHING*, MR. STARK.
MOSTLY.
OKAY, 451. DIAL BACK THE STARKS. CALL ME TONY.
LET'S HEAR YOUR PITCH.
WELL, MR. TONY...

"...IN TWO HOURS YOU WILL BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE SUPREME JUSTICAR..."
TONY STARK. THE IRON MAN. THE SPACE KNIGHT. THE GODKILLER.
BEHOLD...
THE FLAME OF THE VOID FALCON, THE ETERNAL PHOENIX. GONE.
YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE. HAVE YOU ANYTHING YOU CAN SAY TO MITIGATE?

I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT YOU AND THE PHOENIX.
IT WAS SELF-DEFENSE. IT *ATTACKED* EARTH. I TRIED TO DISRUPT IT...DIDN'T WORK.
I ENDED UP TRYING A FEW OTHER THINGS. A LOT OF LAB TIME.
EVENTUALLY, WITH TWO GREAT FRIENDS OF MINE, WE MANAGED TO STOP IT.
NOT "STOP" IT. THE PHOENIX IS *GONE*.
OUR FAITH IS BORN IN FACT. SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, WE HAVE CONCEALED OURSELVES WITH THE HEART OF THE VOLDI AS WE SILENTLY HARVEST ENERGY FROM THE VOID FALCON AND THE OTHER COSMIC FORCES. THEY POWER THE TEAR ITSELF.
AND WE LEARNED TO LOVE THE PROVIDER, THE MOTHER, THE SUN. AND NOW, IF IT WERE NOT FOR WHAT WE TAKE FROM THE STAR GIANTS, THE VOLDI TEAR WOULD BE A DEAD HUSK.
YOU HAVE HURT US BOTH SPIRITUALLY *AND* ECONOMICALLY.
AND NOW YOU TALK OF SELF-DEFENSE? MADNESS.
WOULD YOU SUGGEST THAT ASSASSINATING *GRAVITY* COULD EVER BE JUSTIFIED?
IF IT'S WHAT IT TAKES, SURE.
THE PENITENT IS IMPENITENT. YOU WILL--
BORED NOW.
I DEMAND MY RIGHT TO...

"...SHAY-TAH RUN!"
HOW DID HE EVEN KNOW ABOUT THE RITE? WE HAVEN'T SEEN IT IN MILLENNIA! IT'S FROM THE TIME LONG BEFORE THE FALL.
HE'S A BARBARIAN.
WE WILL DISCOVER LATER.
IF HE KNOWS OF SHAY-TAH RUN, THEN SHAY-TAH RUN HE WILL HAVE.

SHAY-TAH RUN!
SHAY-TAH RUN!
SHAY-TAH RUN!
SHAY-TAH RUN!
THIS IS A TERRIBLE IDEA.
"SHAY-TAH RAH?"

EARLIER.
NO, SHAY-TAH *RUN.*
IF YOU INSIST ON "SHAY-TAH RAH" YOU'LL BE HEROICALLY DEMANDING YOUR RIGHT TO A LAPDOG OF MODERATE SIZE.
TRIAL BY COMBAT?
WITHOUT THE SUIT, I'M NOT EXACTLY THOR...
AND NEITHER ARE THEY.
SHAY-TAH RUN IS A SECRET RITE OF NATURAL ANCIENT VOLDI LAW. THEY BELIEVED IN *NATURAL* ABILITIES.
THE INFINITE JUSTICAR WAS MANIPULATED TO BE A DEFENDER OF HER PEOPLE. SHE CAN'T FIGHT.
WHICH IS *LUCKY.*
YOU WILL BE MERELY FACING HIGHLY TRAINED IF HOBBYIST MARTIAL ARTISTS, ALL WITH *FAR* LESS ACTUAL COMBAT EXPERIENCE THAN YOU...
SO YOU THINK I CAN KICK ALIEN BACKSIDE TO FREEDOM?
ER... UNLIKELY.
YOU HAVE SEVERAL DOZEN CRIMES TO ANSWER TO.

CHANCES ARE, YOU'RE GOING TO GET TIRED AND SOME LUCKY AMATEUR WILL... ER...
KIND OF CAVE YOUR HEAD IN.
SO WHAT DOES THIS GAIN ME?
A FEW HOURS, FOR A START. BUT THEY'RE A PASSIONATE, DECADENT AND COURTLY CULTURE. ALSO, VERY BORED.
IF YOU ACT LIKE A HEROIC FIGURE, YOU'LL CAPTURE THEIR IMAGINATION. THIS HASN'T HAPPENED FOR A THOUSAND YEARS.
THEY'LL BE FASCINATED.
WITH YOU AS A DISTRACTION, I MAY BE ABLE TO REACH YOUR SUIT, RELEASE IT AND INFORM MS. P.E.P.P.E.R. TO COME AND RETRIEVE YOU.
SO, BASICALLY, YOU'RE SAYING, "GET THROWN IN AN ARENA AND STAY ALIVE FOR AS LONG AS I CAN."
SEE! I KNEW YOU'D UNDERSTAND.

"GOOD LUCK!"
CRUNCH
HUH?
TONY STARK: INNOCENT OF CRIMES AGAINST THE TELEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLE.

TONY STARK: INNOCENT OF THREATS AGAINST A COSMIC ENTITY.
TONY STARK: INNOCENT OF CRIMES AGAINST THE MIND OF GOD.
TONY STARK: INNOCENT OF HUBRIS IN THE FIRST DEGREE.

DO NOT WORRY, JUSTICAR.
THE BLASPHEMER WILL SOON TIRE...
IT'S NOT HIM I WORRY ABOUT. IT'S THE VOLDI. THEY ARE ROMANTICS.
HE *PROTECTED* THEM. HE NOW DEFEATS WHAT THEY THINK OF AS THEIR BEST, FAILING TO UNDERSTAND IT'S BEEN MILLIONS OF YEARS SINCE WE'VE BEEN A WARRIOR RACE.
AND MOST OF ALL, ONLY HALF CARRY THEIR FAITH ANY DEEPER THAN THEIR LIPS.
IF THIS CONTINUES, THEY WILL BE DEMANDING HE GOES FREE.
IT HAS TO END...
MA'AM. I HAVE AN IDEA FOR A CHAMPION.
THOUGH WE WILL HAVE TO OFFER HIM CERTAIN FUNDS...
HURRY UP, 451.
EVENTUALLY ONE OF THEM IS GOING TO GRASP HOW HEAD-BUTTS WORK.

"GET ME MY SUIT AND GET ME OUT OF HERE!"
STOP!
THIS IS AN INFINITE SECURITY ZONE! HOW ARE YOU EVEN IN HERE?
WHY AREN'T THE MECHANOHOPLITES--
DON'T YOU WANT TO WATCH THE NICE ARENA FIGHT?
PLEASE. PLEASE GO.
YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE.
IT'S BLASPHEMOUS--
PLEASE. GO. JUST GO.
GET OFF THE--
JUST GO!
I'M CALLING THE--
OH DEAR.

MECHANOHOPLITES: KILL HIM.
YOU COULD STOP, YSI.
YOU COULD ALWAYS STOP.
BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO WATCH.

THE HEART OF THE VOLDI.
YOU HAVE TO ACT.

WE FIND YOU INNOCENT OF GRIEVOUS THEOLOGICAL HARM.
FANTASTIC. CAN I GO FREE?
THE NEXT CHARGE: CONSPIRACY TO DEICIDE.
LET JUDGMENT COMMENCE.
OH, C'MON!
DON'T LOOK LIKE THAT, STARK.
I'LL MAKE IT QUICK.

DON'T YOU WORRY.
DEATH'S HEAD IS A PROFESSIONAL, YES?
TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT ISSUE:

AVS X AFTERMATH

THE GODKILLER

IRON MAN

GILLEN • LAND

MARVEL NOW!

LEISTEN • GURU

AR 008

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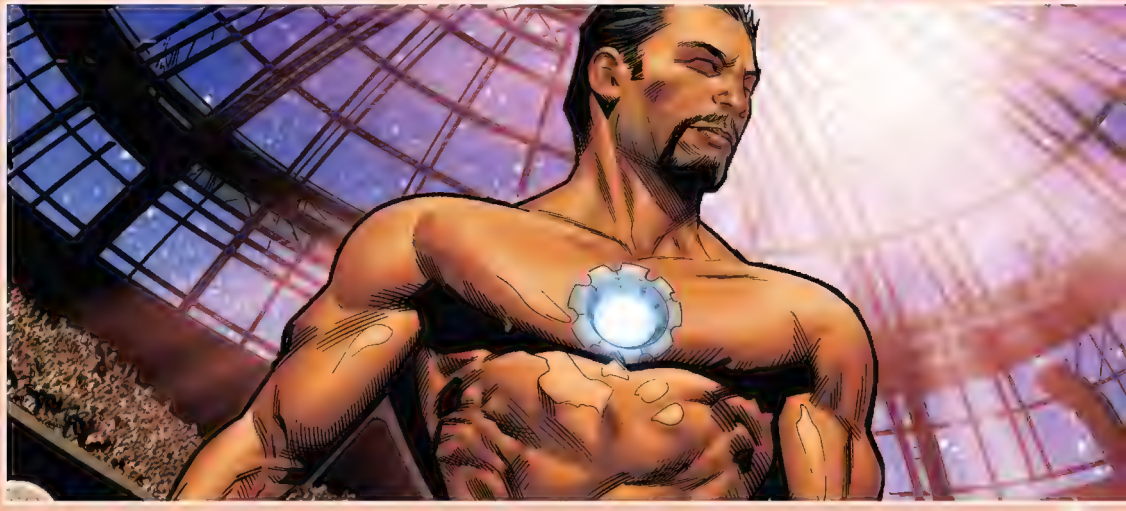
TONY STARK IS A TECHNOLOGICAL VISIONARY...A FAMOUS, WEALTHY AND UNPARALLELED INVENTOR. WITH THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED AND POWERFUL SUIT OF ARMOR, STARK VALIANTLY PROTECTS THE INNOCENT AS AN INVINCIBLE BRIGHT KNIGHT KNOWN AS

IRON MAN



THE GODKILLER CONCLUSION

TONY STARK THOUGHT HE WAS DOING THE RIGHT THING, SAVING AN ALIEN PLANETOID FROM A VICIOUS PIRATE ATTACK! BUT WHILE CELEBRATING HIS VICTORY, THE ALIENS (KNOWN AS THE VOLDI) DISCOVERED HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR KILLING THE WORLD-DESTROYING COSMIC ENTITY KNOWN AS THE PHOENIX FORCE THAT SHOULD BE A GOOD THING, RIGHT? NOT IF SAID ALIEN RACE WORSHIPPED SAID WORLD-DESTROYING ENTITY AS ONE OF THEIR GODS.

SO FOR THE CRIME OF KILLING THEIR DEITY, THE ALIENS IMPRISONED TONY. THANK GOODNESS FOR RECORDER 451, A MULTI-TALENTED ROBOT WITH A PLAN! HE KNEW OF A LOOPHOLE IN THE VOLDI LEGAL SYSTEM AND SUGGESTED TONY USE A TRIAL-BY-COMBAT CLAUSE. IF TONY COULD FEND OFF VOLDI CHALLENGERS, HE COULD BE SET FREE. IN THE MEANTIME, RECORDER 451 TOLD TONY HE'D GO GET HIS ARMOR TO HELP HIM ESCAPE.

BUT THE VOLDI PULLED OUT THEIR OWN LOOPHOLE, A 30-FOOT TALL CYBERNETIC MERCENARY KNOWN AS DEATH'S HEAD. SAID ESCAPE PLAN MIGHT NOT WORK OUT SO WELL AFTER ALL.

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THE VOLDI'S ARENA OF JUSTICE, DEEP SPACE.

IMAGINE YOU'RE IN A BAR. A PARTY. SOME PLACE LIKE THAT.

SOMEONE POSES YOU A HYPOTHETICAL. THEY SAY...

WHAM!

OKAY, YOU'RE IN AN ARENA ON AN ALIEN WORLD IN A TRIAL BY COMBAT FOR **ACCIDENTALLY** KILLING ONE OF AN ALIEN SPECIES' "GODS." AND THEN RATHER THAN WHAT YOU WERE EXPECTING...

THEY SEND IN A 30-FOOT ROBOTIC BOUNTY-HUNTER GOING BY THE OH-SO-FRIENDLY NAME OF "DEATH'S HEAD."

"WHAT DO YOU DO?"

NOW, YOU'LL SAY SOMETHING LIKE, "I'LL LURE HIM IN, GET HIS HEAD STUCK IN A HOLE, CLIMB ONTO HIS SHOULDERS...

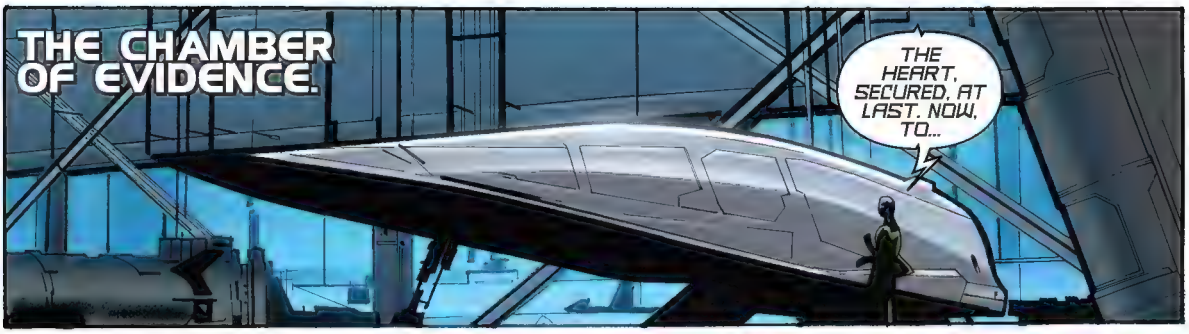
"...KICK OPEN A PANEL IN HIS NECK AND QUICKLY REWIRE HIM TO BE MY AWESOME ROBOT-SLAVE".

ONE PROBLEM.

THAT GUY IN THE BAR?

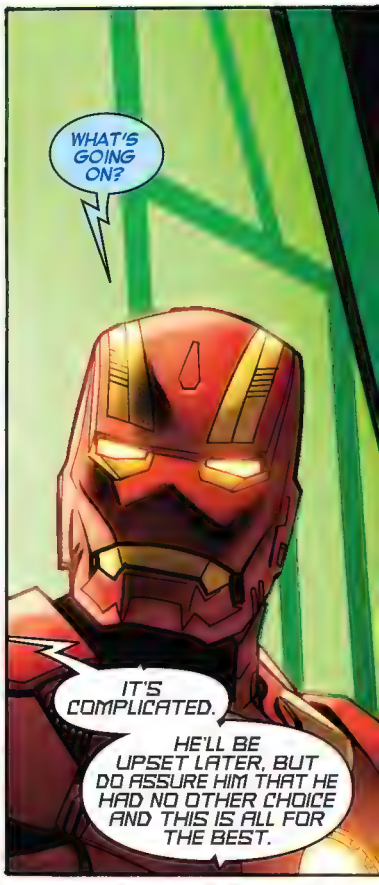
THAT GUY IS FULL OF IT."
WHAT HAPPENED TO "NO ENHANCED COMBATANTS"?
"AS NATURE FINDS YOU," REMEMBER?
AR
ARE YOU SOME KIND OF ORGANIC FASCIST?
DO YOU SEE ME FIRING ROCKETS OR USING MY FLAMETHROWER? I'M NOT USING MY UPGRADES.
THAT WOULD BE CHEATING.
YOU'RE A THIRTY-FOOT ROBOT!

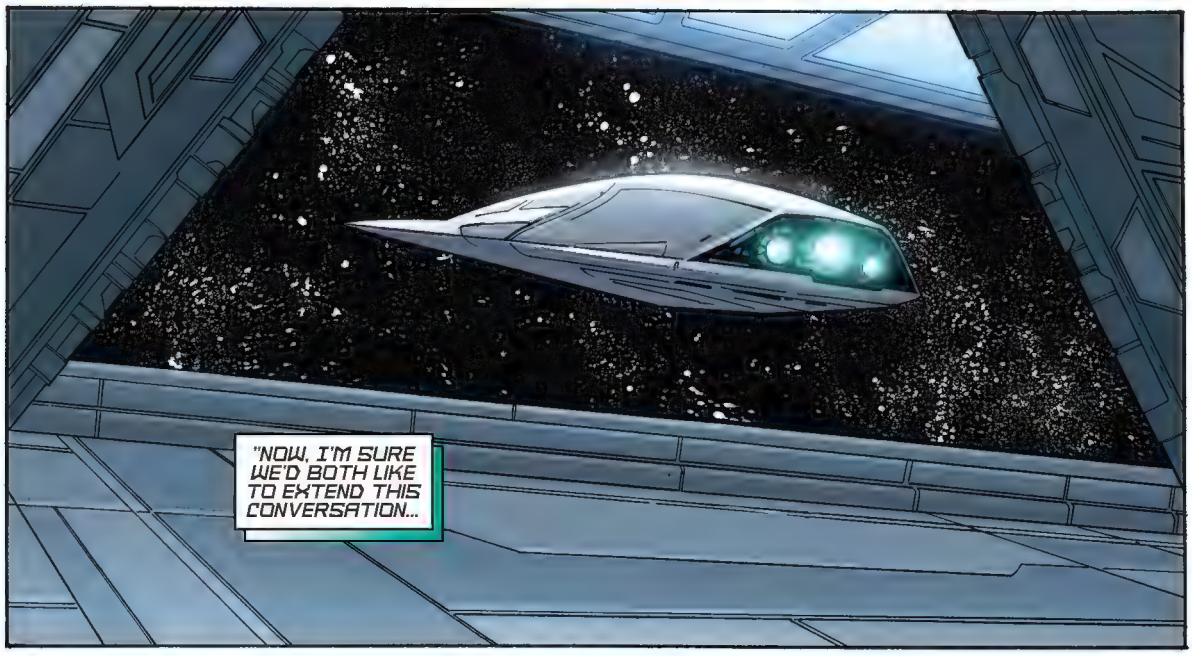
AND THAT'S HOW NATURE MADE ME. WE'RE ALL PART OF NATURE. MEATY OR METALLIC, MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO VOLDI. VERY ENLIGHTENED. ANYONE WHO'S A 1.0 SENTIENT COUNTS.
WE'RE *ALL* JUST MACHINES MADE BY OTHER MACHINES.
BUT I'M NOT BEING PAID TO TALK PHILOSOPHY.
SMASH!
I'M BEING PAID TO KILL YOU.
OVER SOON, YES?


THE CHAMBER OF EVIDENCE.
THE HEART, SECURED, AT LAST. NOW, TO...

AH YES. THE OTHER THING.

HELLO, MS. P.E.P.P.E.R. IT'S ME, 451. THE CODE I'M PULSING SHOULD IDENTIFY ME AS A FRIEND.
I'VE A MESSAGE FROM MR. STARK. HE WANTS YOU TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE SUIT AND COME AND RESCUE HIM, AT YOUR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE.


WHAT'S GOING ON?
IT'S COMPLICATED.
HE'LL BE UPSET LATER, BUT DO ASSURE HIM THAT HE HAD NO OTHER CHOICE AND THIS IS ALL FOR THE BEST.


"NOW, I'M SURE WE'D BOTH LIKE TO EXTEND THIS CONVERSATION...

"...BUT TIME IS EXTREMELY PRESSING."
I'M NOT GOING TO CHASE YOU.
UNDIGNIFIED.
YOU'RE AWARE OF DODGEBALL, YES?
I HATE DODGEBALL.
IT'LL GROW ON YOU.

KRSH!
HEY, TONY.
ZZAP
MY GOD, P.E.P.P.E.R.
YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL.

DON'T FLIRT WITH THE STAFF.
INAPPROPRIATE.
APOLOGIES, P.E.P.P.E.R. WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN.
WE SHOULD PROBABLY...
ENOUGH!
THIS TRIAL IS OVER! STARK FORFEITS! STARK IS GUILTY!
KILL HIM! HE MUST NOT ESCAPE!
WE SHOULD ESCAPE!

I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO.

GOOD ENOUGH, TONY?

NICE WORK, P.E.P.P.E.R. PLOT US AN ARC BACK TO THE ARMORY.
WE NEED TO BE AWAY FROM--
DONE. E.T.A. 5 MINUTES. AND SOME BAD NEWS.
"WE'VE GOT A TAIL.
"AND NOT LIKE WHEN YOU DECIDED TO EXPERIMENT WITH YOUR FURRY SIDE."
OKAY. GET US BACK TO THE ARMORY. HANDLE THE WARP CALCULATIONS. MAKE SURE RELATIVITY CONTINUES TO NOT NOTICE HOW BADLY WE'RE TREATING HER.
I'M ON IT.
AND NOW... F.T.L. TRANSMISSIONS. YOU WORKING TODAY?
ARMORY?
HEY, TONY? WHAT'S UP?
THANK YOU.
PREP THE WARP-HOMERS. THE LATEST ONES.
I'LL BE THERE SHORTLY.

SHORTLY.
C'MON. C'MON. C'MON.
RIGHT, ROBOTS.
HERE'S MY CONSIDERED CASE FOR THE DEFENSE.
HERETIC!
HERETIC!
HERETIC!
HERETIC!

VERITINA'S PALACE, THE VOLDI TEAR.
OH, BRAVO! MAGNIFICENT. REPLAY IT ONCE MORE! HIS HEROISM IS ALMOST ENOUGH TO OVERCOME THE HORROR OF HIS VISAGE.
PERHAPS WITH SOME MANNER OF SHARPENED IMPLEMENT ONE COULD SCOUR HIS FACE OF THAT KERATIN AND...
OH.

A VISITATION FROM THE STAR GIANTS.
IN MY TIME, WE ARE BLESSED.
"THE STAR GIANTS! THE CELESTIALS! THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE!
THE VOLDI HEART CLOUDS THEIR GAZE! THEY SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SEE US..."

SOMETHING MUST BE WRONG WITH THE HEART.
ALL OUR MONITORS SHOW IT'S OPERATING CORRECTLY.
THEN THEY'RE MALFUNCTIONING.
WE MUST BE SWIFT.
IF WE DON'T RETURN THE HEART TO FULL OPERATIONAL STATE, WE...
GONE. BUT--
WHY DO THEY ATTACK? ALL WE EVER DID WAS WORSHIP THEM. AND--
NO. THE TEAR'S POWER COMES FROM...
EVACUATE. WE MUST EVACUATE.
EVACUATE EVERYONE.
I'LL DO MY BEST TO DISTRACT THEM.

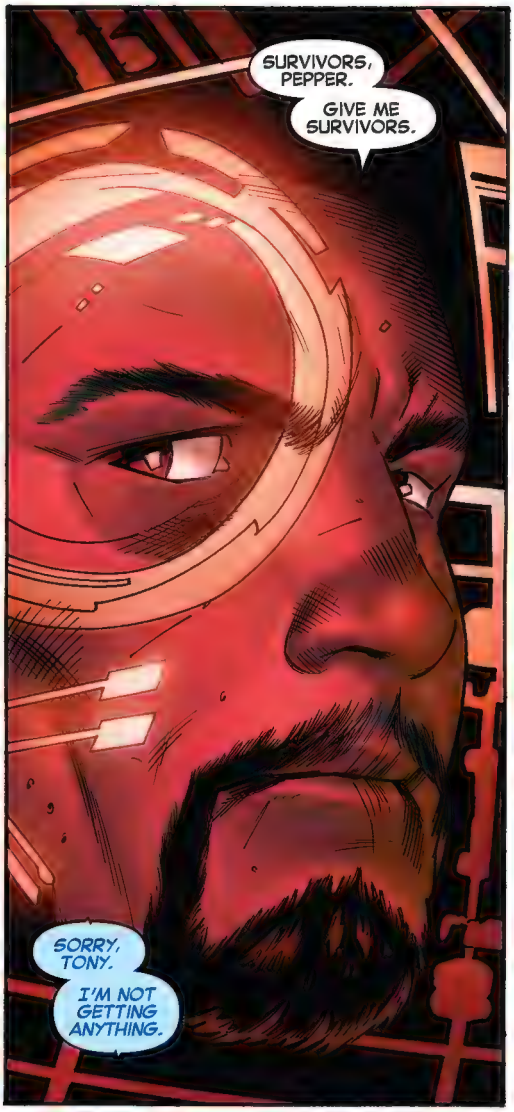
I'M GETTING SOME CRAZY READING FROM THE TEAR.
...I THINK IT'S UNDER ATTACK.
HELL! TRY AND TALK SOME SENSE INTO THESE DRONES.
NO LUCK.
SOLE DIRECTIVE: ANNIHILATE HERESY.
GREAT.
OKAY. GET US BACK THERE. I'LL FIGHT THEM ON THE WAY.
YOU'RE INSANE.
ON IT.
WAIT... DRONES FALLING BEHIND.
THEY'VE LOST ALL POWER.
THEY'RE DEAD.
WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE TEAR?
OH, TONY...

IT'S HORRIBLE.
ACCELERATE.
I DON'T THINK THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.
I'D STAY CLEAR FOR A LITTLE WHILE.
"IT COULD STILL BE DANGEROUS AND YOU'RE TOO LATE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE."
YOU! 451! WHAT'S HAPPENED?
IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN, MR. STARK. TRY THIS...

"DO YOU EVER WONDER WHAT A LEECH WOULD THINK, SITTING ON YOUR SKIN, DRINKING IN YOUR BLOOD? HOW WOULD IT SEE YOU?
"EVENTUALLY, IT MAY COME TO THINK OF YOU AS SOME KIND OF GREAT PROVIDER.
"BECAUSE FROM THE LEECH'S PERSPECTIVE THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU ARE. YOU ARE THE SUN ON ITS LITTLE WORLD.
"THAT'S WHAT THE LEECH WOULD THINK.
"BUT WHAT THE PARASITE THINKS REALLY DOESN'T MATTER.
"IT'S STILL A PARASITE.
"IT'S JUST A PARASITE THAT THE HOST HASN'T NOTICED.

"AND PITY THE PARASITE WHEN IT DOES."

THE VOLDI DESOLATION. DEEP SPACE.
THE HEART HID THE VOLDI FROM THOSE WHO THEY SUBSISTED UPON. I NEEDED THE HEART.
THEIR DESTRUCTION WAS SADLY UNAVOIDABLE.
GOD...


SURVIVORS, PEPPER.
GIVE ME SURVIVORS.
SORRY, TONY.
I'M NOT GETTING ANYTHING.

I APOLOGIZE, MR. STARK. I USED YOU. I'VE BEEN USING YOU FOR SOME TIME. YOU ALWAYS WERE A WEAPON.
AND WHILE I DOUBT THIS WILL BE MUCH COMFORT, A WEAPON ISN'T TO BLAME WHEN SOMEONE PULLS ITS TRIGGER.

THIS WAS ALL YOU, FROM START TO FINISH. THE ROBOT FLEET TO DRAW ME HERE. THE VOLDI REALIZING WHO I WAS. THE ARENA AS A DISTRACTION. EVERYTHING.
JUST FOR SOME FANCY CLOAKING DEVICE?
CORRECT, MR. STARK. A VERY NECESSARY ONE.
AS I SAID, IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO WATCH. EVENTUALLY YOU HAVE TO ACT.
AS IF ONE MORE GENOCIDE MAKES ANY DIFFERENCE. BILLIONS DIE IN PAIN EVERY DAY. THE UNIVERSE IS WAGING WAR AGAINST ITS INHABITANTS.
WITH WHAT I'VE ACQUIRED TODAY, I'LL SAVE MANY MORE LIVES THAN I'VE SACRIFICED.
HOW MANY WORLDS SHOULD ONE BURN TO SAVE THEM ALL, MR. STARK?
AS MANY AS IT REQUIRES.

AND NOW, I MUST BE ABOUT MY WORK.
FAREWELL, SIR.
TONY?
HE DOESN'T ESCAPE. THE KILLER PAYS.
THE KILLER HAS TO PAY.
NEXT: THE SECRET ORIGIN OF TONY STARK!

NEXT ISSUE:

THE SECRET ORIGIN OF TONY STARK

MARVEL NOW!

GILLEN
EAGLESHAM
GURU

IRON MAN

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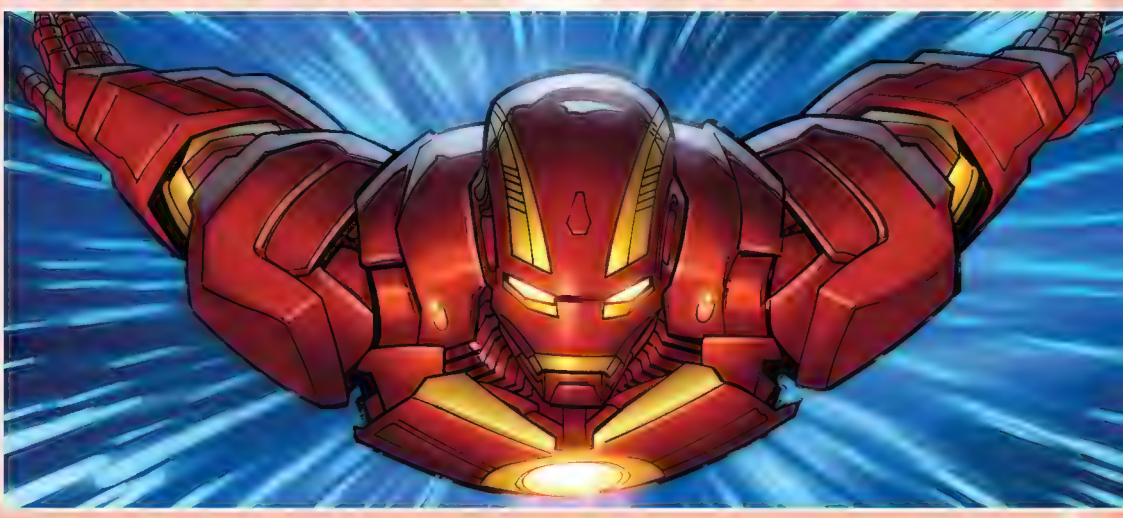

THE SECRET ORIGIN OF TONY STARK PROLOGUE

TONY STARK IS THE EARTH'S GREATEST ENGINEER. HE LEFT THE PLANET TO EXPLORE AND TO PROTECT THE UNIVERSE AS A GUARDIAN OF THE GALAXY.

THIS IS WHAT HE DOES WHEN HE'S NOT A GUARDIAN OF THE GALAXY.

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A DISTANT GALAXY.
"TONY! HOPE'S PUSTULE IS A DIVE PLANETOID.
"THEY DON'T DO IRONY WHEN NAMING THESE PLACES."
THERE'S NOT A MAN, WOMAN OR MECH HERE THAT WOULDN'T KILL YOU FOR THE PAINT ON YOUR ARMOR.
WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR THIS MASS MURDERER FOR WEEKS AND GOT NOWHERE, STAR-LORD.
THE FALLOUT OF THE VOLDI'S DESTRUCTION HAS JUST CAUSED CHAOS. YOU GUYS HAVE GALAXIES TO GUARD. YOU CAN'T IGNORE THAT. AND I CAN'T IGNORE THIS.
IF YOU DON'T HEAR FROM ME IN A WEEK, FEEL FREE TO COME LOOKING...
YOUR FRIENDS ARE RIGHT.
SHUSH, P.E.P.P.E.R.
MAKING MY OWN MISTAKES NOW.

HEY, TONY. GETTING A POWER SURGE...
AND?
DUCK.
THANKS.
KRSH!
YOU WANTED TO MEET.

TALK, BEFORE I HAVE TO ELIMINATE SOMEONE ELSE.
UNNECESSARY EXPENDITURE OF MUNITIONS. ANNOYING NUMBERS IN THE RED COLUMN, YES?

WHAT JUST HAPPENED HERE, DEATH'S HEAD?
MY REPUTATION. ALWAYS SOMEONE THINKS THEY CAN UP THEIRS BY OFFING YOU.
BIG MISTAKE.
WHO ARE WE AFTER?
HE CALLED HIMSELF 451. GOD KNOWS IF IT'S HIS REAL NAME.
WHAT DID HE DO?
HE STOLE THE HEART OF THE VOLDI.
THE VOLDI DREW THEIR POWER FROM ALL THE BIG COSMIC BOYS. PHOENIX, THE CELESTIALS...
THE HEART STOPPED ANY OF THEM FROM REALIZING IT. WITH IT STOLEN, THE CELESTIALS HOMED IN.

I WAS JUST THERE. I SAW THE CELESTIALS AND A LOT OF PEOPLE DYING, BUT NOTHING ELSE...
NOT MUCH EVIDENCE. YOUR WORD. YOUR RECORDINGS.
THAT'S BECAUSE THE WHOLE PLANET WAS ANNIHILATED.
STILL... COURT OF LAW WOULD HAVE PROBLEM, YES?
LUCKY FOR YOU, I'M A BUSINESS-MAN.
YOU'VE GOT A DATA READ ON HIM, YES? LAST KNOWN LOCATION? EMISSION SPECTRUM?
I DO.
MORE IMPORTANTLY: DO YOU HAVE MY ADVANCE?
I DO.
THEN LET'S FIND THIS MECH AND BRING HIM TO JUSTICE, YES?

THE RUINS OF THE VOLDI TEAR.
"I DON'T LIKE TO JUDGE ON APPEARANCES, BUT YOUR SHIP DOESN'T EXACTLY FILL ME WITH CONFIDENCE."
...IS THIS A, "IT DON'T LOOK LIKE MUCH, KID" THING?
I DON'T WASTE MONEY ON PRETTY.
THE STEALTH SUITE IS TOP OF THE LINE. I WAS THE ONLY SURVIVOR FROM THE TEAR. IF I CAN HIDE FROM CELESTIALS, I CAN HIDE FROM ANYTHING.
THE SENSORY ARRAY IS EVEN BETTER. WE'LL FIND YOUR BOT.
WHERE DID YOU GET THEM FROM?
PROBABLY BEST IF YOU DIDN'T ASK QUESTIONS LIKE THAT, YES?
MAY ANSWER.
AND THERE'S YOUR EMISSION TRAIL.
LET'S GO HUNTING, YES?

LATER.
HMM. NO MORE TRAIL...
ADJUSTING...
THERE SHE IS. DEAD IN SPACE.
...NO LIFE SIGNS.
DEAD END?
MAYBE, MAYBE NOT. GRAPEVINE SAYS THERE'S A BADOON CRUISER THAT WENT NEAR THIS SECTOR THREE DAYS AGO.
BADOON HAVE GOOD STEALTH TECH... BUT I TALKED ABOUT MY SENSOR BEING TOP OF THE LINE, YES?
TAKING US IN...
"ACTIVATING OUR CLOAK."

"WILL BREACH HULL FOR AN ENTRANCE...
"RULES OF ENGAGEMENT?"
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
IF IT'S A CHOICE BETWEEN HIS ESCAPE AND HIS DEATH, WHICH WAY DO WE GO?
...THE LATTER.
YOU'RE NOT ONE OF THOSE GUYS WHO HAS A CODE AGAINST KILLING "EXCEPT FOR ROBOTS"?
I HATE THOSE KRYPTO-FASCISTS...
NO! ABSOLUTELY NOT! SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE ROBOTS AN--
THAT SOUNDS KIND OF ROBOT RACIST, RIGHT?
YES.

IT'S JUST HOW IT IS. 451 CAN'T GET AWAY, AFTER EVERYTHING HE'S DONE. HE JUST CAN'T...
I'D RATHER TAKE HIM ALIVE, BUT IF IT'S WHAT WE NEED TO DO...
"I'M YOUR EMPLOYEE. I DON'T JUDGE.
"YOUR MISSION, YOUR RULES."
DO NOT STRESS YOUR PRETTY LITTLE HEAD.
THEN THE MISSION IS GET HIM.
NO MATTER WHAT.
BZZZZ
I UNDERSTAND. THE PREY WON'T ESCAPE.
DEATH'S HEAD ALWAYS GETS HIS MAN.
KICK
PSH

HELL...
NEAR AS, ANYWAY...
ALL SELF-INFLICTED. MASS SUICIDE.
BADOON AREN'T NORMALLY SO DEPRESSIVE, YES?
...GUESS 451 IS PRETTY PERSUASIVE WHEN HE WANTS TO BE.

P.E.P.P.E.R.? GOT ANYTHING?
TRACES OF ARTIFICIAL PHEREMONES. NEURO-ACTIVE GASES.
DISTRIBUTED VIA THE LIFE SUPPORT.
OKAY. THE SUIT'S SEALED ALREADY. BUT LET'S BE CAREFUL. WHO KNOWS WHAT 451 CAN DO.
PROCESS ALL AUDIO. MAX THE PSI-SHIELDING.
YOU GOT IT.
WON'T THAT UP YOUR POWER SIGNATURE? WE'RE TRYING TO KEEP A LOW PROFILE.
NO, WE'RE GOOD.
HOW COME A 30-FOOT ROBOT SPENDS SO MUCH TIME WORRYING ABOUT BEING STEALTHY?
PAYS TO BE CAREFUL.
THERE'S ALWAYS A BIGGER BOT.
WAIT...
...THERE HE IS.

HE'S COMING THIS WAY. AMBUSH.
LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH.
WHATEVER YOU SAY, BOSS

AH, THERE YOU ARE.
HELLO.
...
IS THIS WHAT WE AGREED ON?
YES. GOOD DOING BUSINESS.
RELAX THE POSE, P.E.P.P.E.R.
IT'S GOING TO BE EMBARRASSING ENOUGH LOSING THE BATTLE WITHOUT LOSING HIS DIGNITY.
AND RETRACT THE HELMET...
YES, SIR.
PSSS
SORRY, TONY.

--YOU TRAITOROUS LITTLE, #$%& OF A #$%& BOUNTY HUNTER!
LANGUAGE.
JUST DOING MY JOB. FINDING PEOPLE AND BRINGING THEM TO WHERE THEY SHOULD BE, FOR A SUITABLE FINANCIAL RENUMERATION.
THE ROBOT HIRED ME FIRST.
HERE'S YOUR FEE BACK...
I'LL DOUBLE WHATEVER HE'S PAYING!
PLEASE, STARK. DON'T INSULT ME.
A MECH HAS TO HAVE ETHICS, YES?
SO, MR. STARK.
WHERE WERE WE?

YOU COULD COMPROMISE MY SECURITY, WHY NOT JUST KIDNAP ME AFTER YOU DESTROYED THE VOLDI?
STRICTLY SPEAKING, I DIDN'T DESTROY THE VOLDI...
...BUT I'LL LET YOU HAVE THAT ONE. I MAY AS WELL HAVE.
I'VE DONE ENOUGH TERRIBLE THINGS WITHOUT ADDING PEDANTRY TO MY CRIMES.
YOU'RE SICK. THAT WAS A GENOCIDE.
HOW CAN YOU MAKE JOKES?
GOD KNOWS HOW MANY DIED AND Y--
602,025.
I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.
I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I'M DOING.

YOU HAVE FRIENDS, MR. STARK. IF I TOOK YOU THEN, IT RISKED THEM COMING AFTER YOU.
AND, JUST AS IMPORTANTLY, I HAD A FEW FINAL THINGS TO PREPARE.
SO THIS IS ALL STILL PART OF YOUR RIDICULOUS PLAN.
EXACTLY, MR. STARK. IT'S ONE I'VE BEEN WORKING ON FOR SOME TIME.
SIT DOWN.
SEE THIS?
DON'T YOU HAVE ANYTHING BETTER THAN *FILM?*
OH YES.
ACTUALLY, I'VE RECORDING METHODS FROM THOUSANDS OF WORLDS...
BUT I THOUGHT THAT PERIOD AUTHENTICITY MAY BE FOR THE BEST...
BECAUSE, MR. STARK, YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE THIS OTHERWISE.

2
SON.
...DAD.

THERE ARE THINGS I HAVEN'T TOLD YOU.
THINGS...
THIS IS GOING TO BE HARD FOR YOU.
I HOPE...
...I HOPE YOU'LL FORGIVE ME.
I JUST HOPE YOU CAN COME TO TERMS WITH IT.

YOUR MOM AND I LOVE YOU SO MUCH.
IT WAS FOR EARTH. IT WAS FOR THE FUTURE.
THAT'S HOW WE JUSTIFIED THIS...
BUT REALLY, WE DID IT ALL FOR YOU.
IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO KNOW THE TRUTH.
SON...
...YOU MAY NEED A DRINK.

NOT A RIDICULOUS PLAN, MR. STARK.
JUST A LONG ONE.
TO BE CONTINUED...

IRON CAST

First off, I want to welcome you to the beginning of an historical IRON MAN arc that will undoubtably rock the character to his core. Kieron's plan for THE SECRET ORIGIN OF TONY STARK is jam-packed with so many surprises, twists, turns and revelations it's an understatement to say it's going to be the most important IRON MAN arc in the past decade. Whew! Now that I got that exclamation out of the way (don't say I didn't warn you), on to your letters:

When did Kieron meet my ex-girlfriend? Veritina's reaction to Tony's "Strands of Keratin" on his face is spot on with my ex's response every time I neglected to shave. In fact it was almost verbatim. Thank you for the laugh!

Keep up the good work!

Drewzer

One of the things I enjoy about Kieron's writing is that he knows when to drop in a line of humor at just the right time, Drewzer. While we're going down a very serious path for ol' Shellhead now, Kieron is a skilled enough writer to make you crack a smile every now and then.

To Iron Cast,

I am a full time RN and student. My wife is a full-time student with a night job. I have a three year old special needs son and an 18-month old daughter. I am a very busy person. That being said, I have dropped everything to thank you from the bottom of my heart for choosing to use Death's Head in your latest arc. He is one of my all-time favorite characters and I didn't think I would ever see him again after the whole Death's Head II debacle. It brings me back to the days when I first discovered comics! I love the modernized version of him. Thank you!! You guys are doing a great job. Iron Man has become my favorite monthly read. It's obvious that you are all putting a lot of effort into your creation. The space armor is the best so far, but I also really liked the color scheme of the stealth armor. Very cool! I sincerely cannot wait to see what happens next! Make mine MARVEL NOW!!

Frank V.

Thanks, Frank! As a dad myself I can relate to the crazy busy life of a parent. It makes us all very happy to hear that you're enjoying this book. As you can see from this issue, our favorite 30' tall, cybernetic bounty hunter is still roaming around and playing a role in turning Tony's world upside down. More DH to come!

Hey Shell Head Team,

Always been an Iron Man fan for the most part, although, I didn't start buying issues regularly until Marvel Now! Iron Man #1. So far I'm really enjoying it. I've even recently added it to my pull file which is rare as I'm very picky (only other comics in my pull file are Spidey and Hawkeye).

Issue #6 was my most recent read and I enjoyed it. Any chances of seeing Iron Man join up with the Uncanny Avengers soon? Hope so!

Overall, I'm a fan. Keep up the good work!

Josh
New Brunswick, Canada

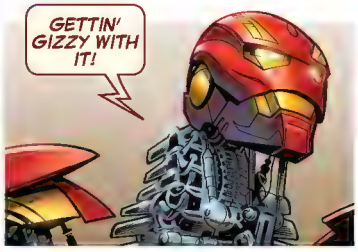
I'm sure Tony will be popping up over in UNCANNY AVENGERS one of these days, Josh. And thanks for keeping us on your pull list in the company of such other great Marvel titles.

Dude!

Ok, so even with the Iron Man tattoo on my leg, I was still a bit dubious over the current series. I want my Iron Man repulsor-raying the bad guys left and right, standing up for justice and in his classic red and gold suit of armor. Hearing that the first few issues would be featuring different armors I was a bit timid. The armor is what sets me up to read.

Holy cow, did you guys ever blow my mind! This has been nothing but amazing so far! Issues #1-6 have totally stolen the show and I can't wait to get up to issue #60! The gadgets and gizmos I've seen have made me wonder what other amazing toys you guys can come up with and the scenarios in which they are best used. Here's to you making a firm believer out of me! So glad I took the chance!

Sincerely,
Travis!



We love gadgets and gizmos, too, Travis. And wait till you see some of the new armors we have in the pipeline.

Dear Editors,

It's been a couple decades since I read comic books regularly, but recently I decided to dive back in, starting with Iron Man. I found the first couple issues enjoyable, and by issue #4 I was fully drawn in (the Tolkien and Lovecraft references did the trick). Now, I've just finished reading issue #6 and I have a stupid smile on my face and a spring in my step. That was the most enjoyable four bucks I've spent in a long time. Looking forward to many more such experiences!

Terry
Washington, DC

Issue #6, the first part of the GODKILLER arc, has been getting a lot of great reactions, Terry. Hope you enjoyed the rest of it and stay tuned for more springy step-inducing stories. (Hmmmm, TALES TO PUT A SPRING IN YOUR STEP, I kind of like that title.)

That's all the room we have. Let me know what you think of this issue. You can write us at IRONOFFICE@MARVEL.COM and I love to get your tweets, too. See you in issue #10!!!

Send letters to:
IronOffice@marvel.com (be sure to mark it "ok to print").

Mark Paniccia
Senior Editor

IRON MAN VARIANT GALLERY:

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

1. DEADPOOL VARIANT

2. DYNAMIC FORCES VARIANT ("NOSE ARMOR")

3. HASTINGS VARIANT (STEALTH ARMOR)

4. PHANTOM VARIANT (SPACE ARMOR)

5. MAXIMUM COMICS VARIANT (MOVIE ARMOR)

6. MIDTOWN COMICS VARIANT (RENAISSANCE ARMOR)

7. MILE HIGH COMICS VARIANT (THORBUSTER ARMOR)

8. THIRD EYE COMICS VARIANT (IRON PATRIOT ARMOR)

9. IRON MAN #17 CLASSIFED VARIANT 10/02/13

NEXT ISSUE:

IRON MAN

THE SECRET ORIGIN OF TONY STARK

AR

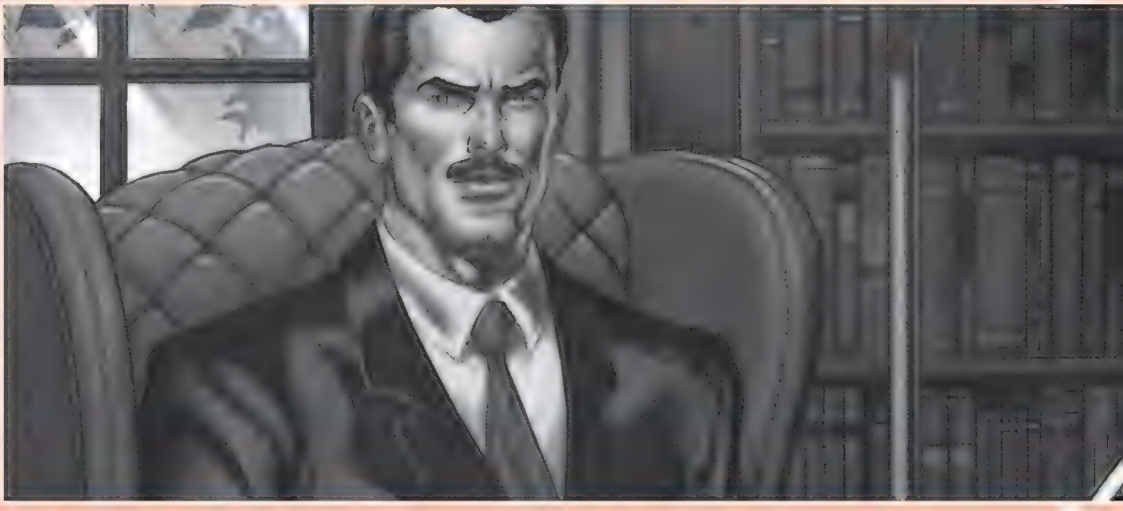
MARVEL NOW!

GILLEN
EAGLESHAM
GURU

010

TONY STARK IS A TECHNOLOGICAL VISIONARY, A FAMOUS, WEALTHY AND UNPARALLELED INVENTOR. WITH THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED AND POWERFUL SUIT OF ARMOR, STARK VALIANTLY PROTECTS THE INNOCENT AS AN INVINCIBLE, BRIGHT KNIGHT KNOWN AS

IRON MAN



TONY STARK AND THE BOUNTY HUNTER DEATH'S HEAD WERE IN PURSUIT OF THE MURDEROUS ROBOT RECORDER 451. THEY FOUND HIM, BUT 451 WAS ONE STEP AHEAD AND PAID OFF DEATH'S HEAD TO DOUBLE-CROSS TONY. NOW THE PRISONER OF THE DROID, TONY IS FORCED TO WATCH A RECORDING OF HIS FATHER AND 451 TOGETHER, SUGGESTING THAT 451 HAS BEEN PART OF TONY'S LIFE FROM THE BEGINNING.

THE SECRET ORIGIN OF TONY STARK PART ONE

When you see this: AR, open up the MARVEL AR APP (available on applicable Apple ® iOS or Android ™ devices) and use your camera-enabled device to unlock extra-special exclusive features!

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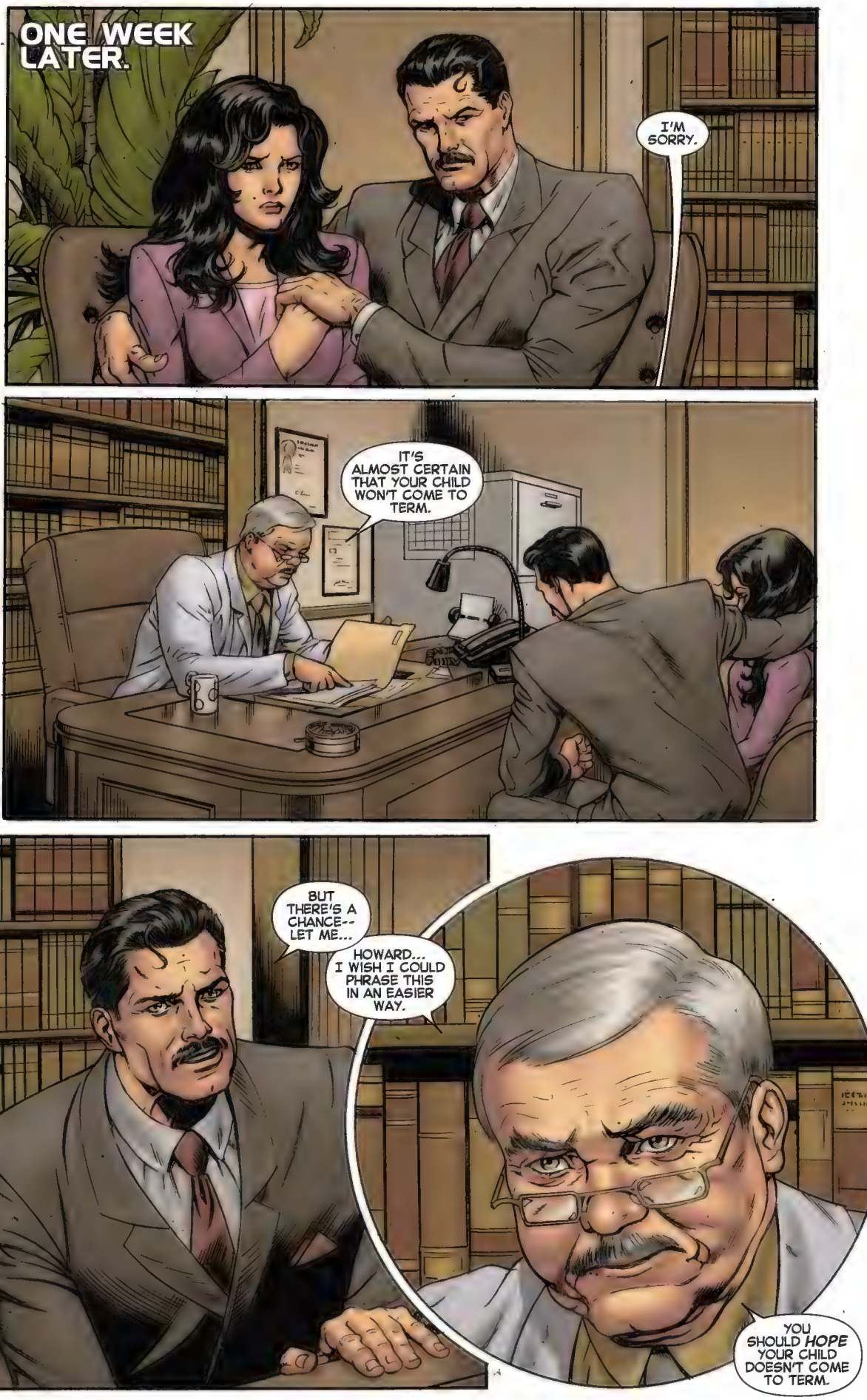
AND... THAT'S EVERYTHING, MR. STARK.
ANYTHING TO SAY?
I...
DEEP SPACE.
I...
UNDERSTANDABLE.
P.E.P.P.E.R., RETURN MR. STARK THE CONTROL OF HIS LIMBS.
CURTAIL ALL HOSTILE ACTIONS AGAINST MY PERSONAGE OR THE VESSEL AND ANY ATTEMPT TO LEAVE.
DONE. YOU COMPLETE
MONSTER. I KNOW.
I KNOW. I KNOW.

TONY... I'M SORRY. I CAN'T DISOBEY HIM.
THIS ISN'T ME.
THIS ISN'T ME EITHER.
I DON'T BELIEVE ANY OF THIS.
I...
IT'S ALL TRUE, MR. STARK. IT'S DIFFICULT TO THINK ABOUT, BUT THAT DOESN'T CHANGE ANYTHING.
AND IT'S NOT SO UNUSUAL, NO MATTER WHAT WE TELL OURSELVES...

NO ONE IS A SELF-MADE MAN.
MOM, DAD...

"HOW COULD YOU?"
THE STARK PENTHOUSE, HALF A LIFETIME AGO.
MARIA, ARE YOU... HOW DO YOU FEEL?
VOMITY, HOWARD.
DISTINCTLY *VOMITY.*
IN A GOOD WAY?
NEVER IN A GOOD WAY.
BUT... IT'S THREE MONTHS. THAT'S PROMISING.
JUST *PROMISING?* AFTER EVERYTHING...
...I'D CALL THAT A MIRACLE.
IT'S A VOMITY MIRACLE.


ONE WEEK LATER.
I'M SORRY.
IT'S ALMOST CERTAIN THAT YOUR CHILD WON'T COME TO TERM.
BUT THERE'S A CHANCE-- LET ME...
HOWARD... I WISH I COULD PHRASE THIS IN AN EASIER WAY.
YOU SHOULD *HOPE* YOUR CHILD DOESN'T COME TO TERM.

HOWARD. WE'LL GET THROUGH THIS. WE CAN ALWAYS ADOPT.
THIS ISN'T THE END. THIS IS...
I KNOW, I KNOW.
IT'S JUST...
THE CONTACTS, THE INFLUENCE, THE POWER, EVERYTHING...
...AND I CAN'T EVEN BUY A DAY BENEATH THE SKY FOR OUR SON.
OUR CHILD.
THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING.

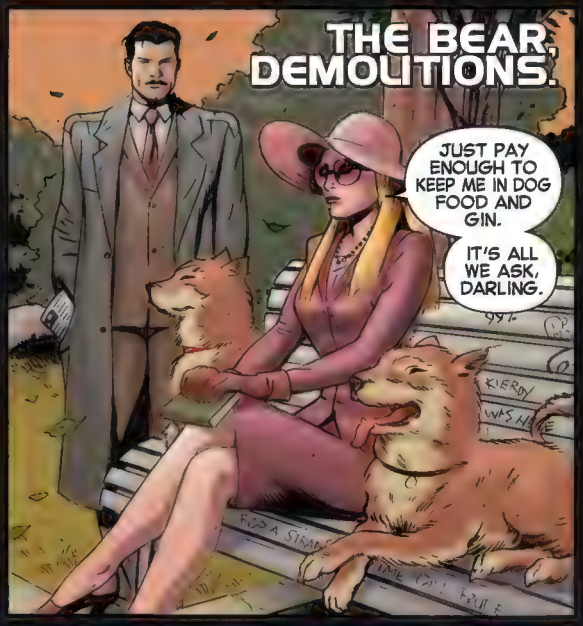
CALIFORNIA.
I'M SORRY, HOWARD. I REALLY AM.
IT'S NOT MY FIELD, BUT WE CAN MERGE CONTACT LISTS...
LONDON.
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU FOUND ME, MR STARK, OR WHY YOU'D THINK THAT I WOULD WISH TO HELP.
LET ME PUT YOUR MIND TO REST: YOUR CHILD WOULD CERTAINLY NOT SURVIVE MY METHODOLOGY.
TIBET.
THERE IS NOTHING IN THE SEVEN CITIES OF HEAVEN THAT CAN HELP YOU.
THE ETERNAL CITY.
SAVING THE WORLD IS IN SOME WAYS EASIER THAN SAVING A SINGLE LIFE.
WUNDAGORE MOUNTAIN.
MAYBE I COULD HELP.
ASSUMING YOU DIDN'T REQUIRE THE CHILD REMAIN HUMAN. OR YOURS.
THE LAST-CHANCE BAR.
NEVADA. NEVADA HAS SECRETS.
I KNOW A GUY WHO KNOWS A GUY WHO...

NEVADA.
YOU'RE MAKING BIG PROMISES, MR. ROLLO. I DON'T BELIEVE YOU CAN DO EVEN HALF. EVEN A TENTH.
CONVINCE ME.
THERE'S A CASINO IN VEGAS THAT'S RUN BY ALIENS. LIKE, A BRANCH OF AN ALIEN CRIME FAMILY.
THE FAMILY IS LOW-RENT THEMSELVES, BUT THEY'VE GOT THEIR HANDS ON SOME REAL SWEET TECH. IF YOU'VE GOT A PROBLEM, IF ANYTHING CAN SOLVE IT, IT CAN.
WE JUST NEED TO STEAL IT.
YOU KNOW WHAT I DON'T HAVE?
TIME TO WASTE.
HEY, ROLLO DON'T WASTE NO TIME.
OKAY. YOU GUYS SERIOUSLY RUN A CASINO? WHICH CASI...
OH NO.
YES.

"WHERE ELSE? AREA 52.
"HELL, SOMETIMES WE GO WALKING AROUND WITHOUT OUR IMAGE INDUCERS. IT'S VEGAS. WHO BELIEVES ANYTHING IN VEGAS?"
52
AR
SO... WHAT'S YOUR DEAL?
YOU KNOW THE GUYS WHO HANG AROUND PENN STATION OFFERING TO HELP HICKS WITH THE LUGGAGE AND THEN DO A DISAPPEARING ACT WITH THEIR BAGS OF PUMPKINS? COSMICALLY SPEAKING, THAT'S US. THE GREYS.
FINDING SPECIES JUST SMART ENOUGH TO HAVE STUFF WORTH STEALING...BUT NOT SMART ENOUGH TO STOP US TAKING IT.
BUT EVERYTHING'S ON THE DOWN LOW. NEVADA'S NOT THE PROBLEM. NEVADA KNOWS. NEVADA DOESN'T CARE. THEY'VE WELCOMED WORSE.
BUT IF THE-- ER--BIGGER BOYS EVER FIND OUT WHAT WE'RE DOING, IT'LL BE HELL ON EARTH FOR US AND NO MORE EARTH FOR YOU.
THAT'S THE GREYS' DEAL. WHAT'S YOURS?
A MONTH BACK, THE BOSS GOT HIS HANDS ON A FANCY PANTS ROBOT WITH A HUNDRED-DOLLAR MOUTH. GRABBED HIM AS HE TRIED TO LAND ON EARTH...
"ROBOT'S BEING UNHELPFUL. TURNED ON A FORCE FIELD AND WENT INTO SLEEP MODE. BOSS CAN'T CRACK IT, AT LEAST YET.
"THEY KEEP HIM AS AN ORNAMENT IN THE TOP SAUCER'S GALLERY, IN THE HEAVIEST DUTY RESTRAINTS THEY'VE GOT.

"ANYWAY, I WAS PASSING BY ONE DAY, AND HE WOKE UP. THE BOT JUST LOOKED AT ME AND SAID..."
MR. ROLLO.
I HAVE A PROPOSITION FOR YOU.
"HE PROMISED ME A BIG PERSONAL DOWNLOAD OF SOME TASTY DATA IF I CAN GET HIM OUT. ALL THE BOSS GAVE US WAS SCRAPS. NOTHING PERSONAL, JUST A BETTER DEAL."
GAVE ME A LIST OF HUNDREDS OF YOU HUMAN PEOPLE HE WANTED TO HOOK UP WITH. YOU WERE NEAR THE TOP.
HOW CAN I BELIEVE YOU?
CHECK OUT THE DOCUMENTS.
SERIOUSLY? THERE'S NOTHING HE DOESN'T KNOW. HE'S THE ULTIMATE LIBRARIAN AND THE GUY WHO KNOWS WHERE ALL THE BODIES ARE BURIED. WEAPONS, TECH, GIRLS...
MEDICAL TECH?
OH YEAH. IF THAT'S YOUR THING.
AND YOU CAN GET US INSIDE?
YEAH. BUT ONLY THE BOSS CAN OPEN THE RESTRAINTS ON THE BOT. THAT'S THE BIG PROBLEM.
YOU'RE GOING TO NEED ONE HELL OF A CREW.
I KNOW PEOPLE.

JIMMY WOO, FBI.
JIMMY. JIMMY. JIMMYJIMMYJIMMMY.
YOU OWE ME.
NOT AFTER THIS.


THE BEAR, DEMOLITIONS.
JUST PAY ENOUGH TO KEEP ME IN DOG FOOD AND GIN.
IT'S ALL WE ASK, DARLING.

NESSA THE KITTEN, CARD SHARK.
SO YOU'RE SAYING YOU'RE RUNNING A HIGH-STAKES GAME?
HOWARD. AS IF I'D EVER SAY NO.

"DUM DUM" DUGAN, CIA.
C'MON! WOO SAID YES...
AND FURY?
FURY'S GOT A COLD.
DAMMIT.

LIEUTENANT "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS, U.S. SPECIAL FORCES
YOU OWE ME.
I DON'T OWE YOU. YOU ALREADY OWE ME.
NOW I'LL OWE YOU TWICE, BIG MAN.

THEN, STARK...

THE STARK SEVEN,
LAS VEGAS.
T-2 HOURS.
LET'S DO THIS THING.

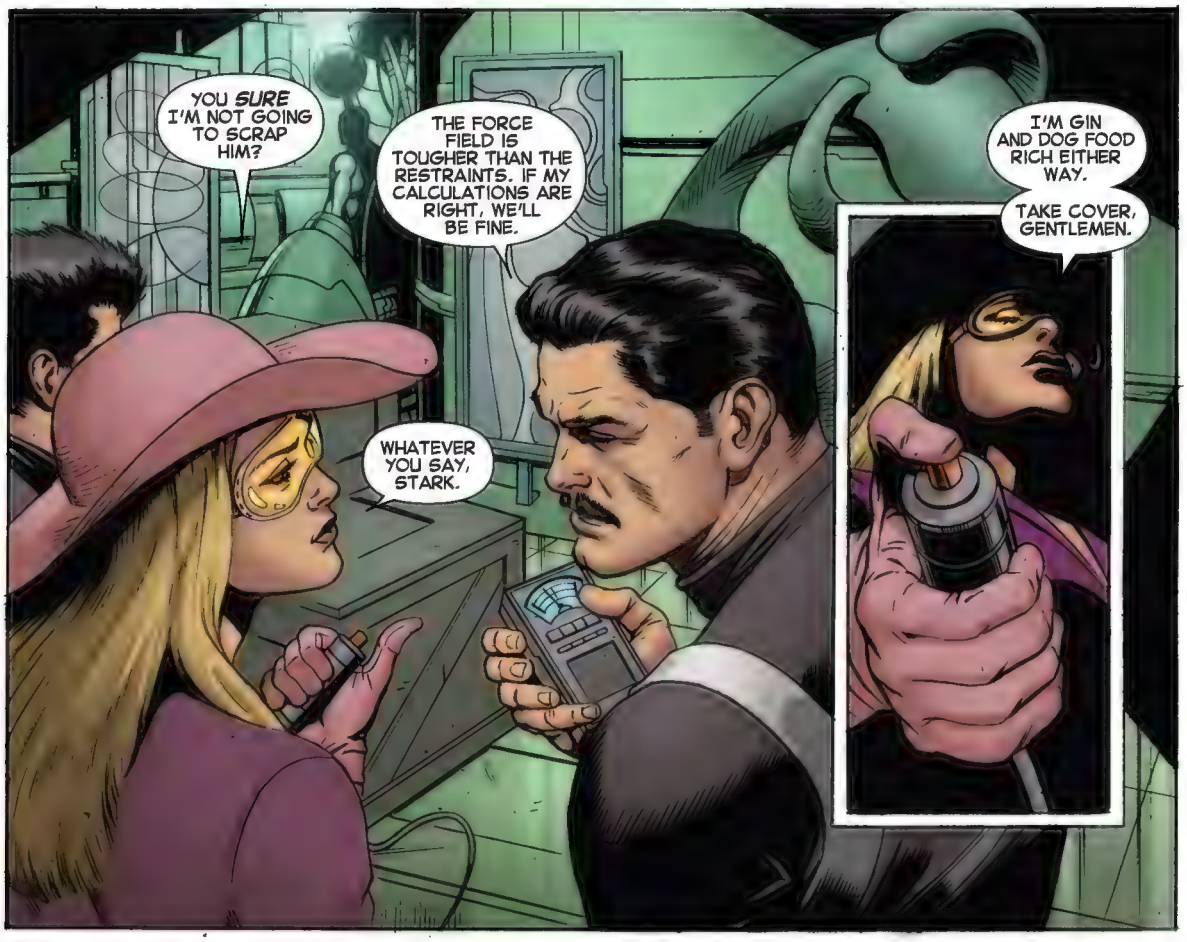
"HEY, BOSS. WHY DO YOU WANT TO SEE ME?"
WHAT'S UP?
WHO HAVE YOU SOLD US OUT TO, ROLLO?
WHAT YOU TALKING ABOUT, BOSS?
YOU KNOW ROLLO'S GOOD.
SOME HUMANS ARE TRYING TO RUN A HEIST ON THIS CASINO.
AND WHICH FAMILY MEMBER IS DUMB AND GREEDY ENOUGH TO BE AN INSIDE MAN FOR SAPIENS?
COME, ROLLO.
CLICK
HELP A BUNCH OF SAPES? NO WAY.
THEN EXPLAIN THIS.

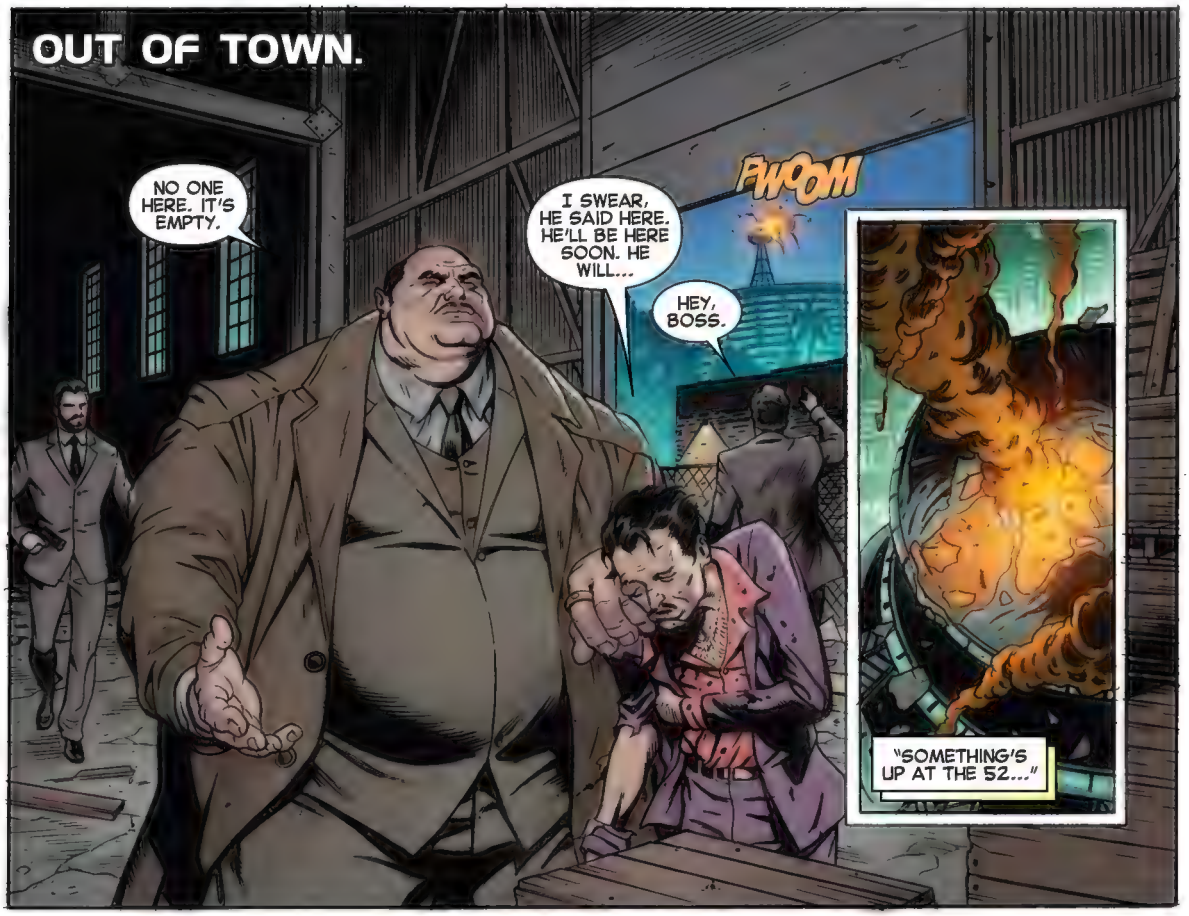
AND NOW WE'VE LOST TRACK OF THEM ALL.
SPILL, ROLLO. SPILL AND I'LL TRY AND FIND IT IN ME TO LET YOU KEEP YOUR FACE ATTACHED TO YOUR SKULL.

I'M A GREY. IF I KNEW ANYTHING, I'D TELL YOU.
AND IF I WAS SOME KIND OF RAT, THERE'S NOTHING YOU COULD DO TO MAKE ME TALK.

WANTED THE BOT. GAVE HIM ACCESS CODES TO UP HERE.
I HAD NO CHOICE, I HAD--
SHUT IT.
CHECK THE BOT.
HE'S GONE.
IMPOSSIBLE.
ROLLO'S CODES CAN GET THEM IN THERE. BUT ONLY I CAN RELEASE THE BOT...
HOW CAN I FIND THIS GUY, ROLLO?
WE WERE GOING TO MEET UP TO GIVE ME MY SLICE.
OUT OF TOWN. I CAN SHOW YOU THE WAY.
INDUCERS ON.
EVERYONE MOVE.

PALACE
BIG S TO TEAM 1. BAIT TAKEN. WE'VE GOT THE CODE.
GET THE HELL OUT OF THERE. GOOD WORK ON DISTRACTING THEM.
THE SUITS HELD UP, AT LEAST. JURY-RIGGED FROM THOSE IMAGE INDUCERS? NICE WORK, HOWARD. WE GET TO KEEP THEM?
AFTER WHAT YOU DID? LEAST I COULD DO.
AND... INDUCER OFF.
BEAR. GET IN HERE.
YOUR TURN AT THE PLATE...
BEST BACK OFF, GENTLEMEN.
BLEEP! BLEEP! BLEEP!


YOU SURE I'M NOT GOING TO SCRAP HIM?
THE FORCE FIELD IS TOUGHER THAN THE RESTRAINTS. IF MY CALCULATIONS ARE RIGHT, WE'LL BE FINE.
WHATEVER YOU SAY, STARK.
I'M GIN AND DOG FOOD RICH EITHER WAY.
TAKE COVER, GENTLEMEN.


OUT OF TOWN.
NO ONE HERE. IT'S EMPTY.
I SWEAR, HE SAID HERE. HE'LL BE HERE SOON. HE WILL...
HEY, BOSS.
FWOOM
"SOMETHING'S UP AT THE 52..."

HEY!
NEED A LIFT HOME, HONEY?
YOU ARE MOST CERTAINLY ONE OF THOSE WOMEN WHO GET MORE BEAUTIFUL WHEN PREGNANT.
OH, EXCELLENT. RESCUED.
A PLEASURE TO MAKE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE, MR. STARK. I DO BELIEVE I OWE YOU.
WHERE'S ROLLO?
HE GOT THE GREYS OUT OF THE BASE.

HE KNEW THEY'D BUY HE WAS A SCREW-UP AND GOT TRICKED INTO THE BAD END OF A DEAL.
HE'LL MEET US LATER.
OH DEAR.
"ROLLO'S OPTIMISM WAS ONE OF THE THINGS I LIKED MOST ABOUT HIM."
HE PLAYED ME.
BOSS, WE'LL FIND HIM AND GET THE ROBOT BACK. I SWEAR, I WON'T REST...
ROLLO, THIS BREAKS MY HEART.
EITHER THIS IS FOR REAL AND YOU GOT FOOLED, OR THIS IS A TRICK AND YOU'RE STILL WITH THEM.
EITHER WAY, I THINK YOU'VE LOST SOME BRAIN PRIVILEGES.
BLAM!
WE'VE GOT A ROBOT TO FIND.

THE PRESENT.
LOSING ROLLO WAS A SHAME. HE WAS RELATIVELY KIND FOR A GREY. THOUGH JUST AS GREEDY. STILL...IT WAS ALL FOR A GREATER CAUSE. YOUR PARENTS AND I...
IT'S QUITE ASTOUNDING WHAT PEOPLE FROM TREMENDOUSLY DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS CAN ACHIEVE WHEN THEIR OBJECTIVES ARE PROPERLY ALIGNED...
AS WILL BE ILLUSTRATED AS WE PROCEED.
SHIP?
IT'S RUDE TO SPEAK IN A LANGUAGE EVERYONE CAN'T UNDERSTAND. PLEASE DON'T.
WARP ACTIVATED.
THAT'S BETTER.
"WE HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO AND A UNIVERSE TO SAVE.
"YOU'LL SEE THAT I DID ALL THIS FOR A VERY GOOD REASON."
YOU KILLED A PLANET "FOR A REASON."
THAT I DID, MR. STARK.
THAT I DID.

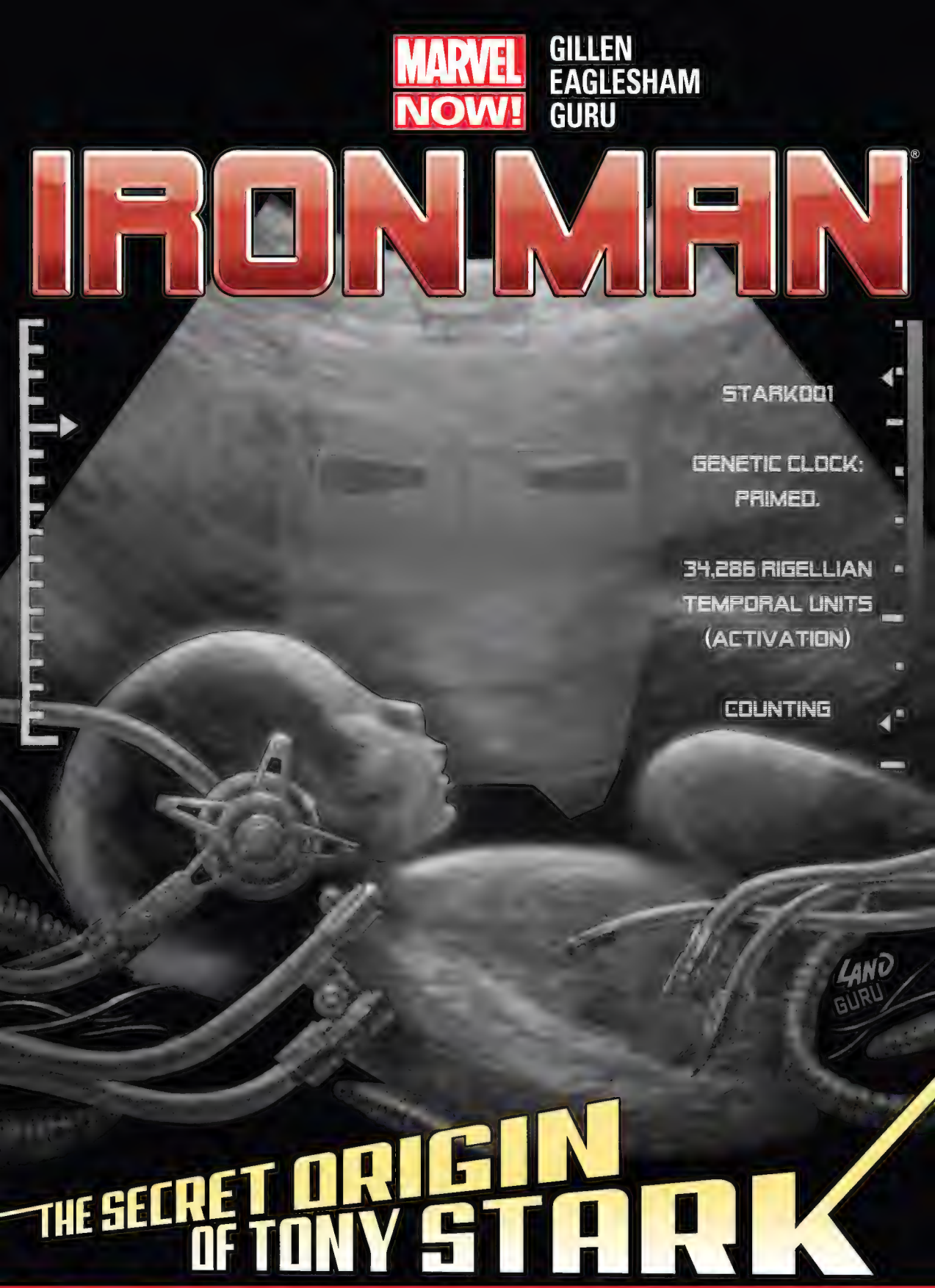
REST. THIS IS A LITTLE SEDATIVE TO HELP YOU SLEEP.
WE'LL NEED YOUR TALENTS BEFORE WE REACH OUR DESTINATION.
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS. I DON'T BELIEVE ANY OF THIS...
IT'S NOT THAT BAD, MR. STARK.
IT REALLY ISN'T.
THINK OF IT LIKE THIS:
YOUR PARENTS LOVED YOU.
"ALL YOUR PARENTS LOVED YOU."
TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT ISSUE:

MARVEL NOW!

GILLEN
EAGLESHAM
GURU

IRON MAN



THE SECRET ORIGIN OF TONY STARK

JOIN THE REVOLUTION

AR

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TONY STARK IS A TECHNOLOGICAL VISIONARY, A FAMOUS, WEALTHY AND UNPARALLELED INVENTOR. WITH THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED AND POWERFUL SUIT OF ARMOR, STARK VALIANTLY PROTECTS THE INNOCENT AS AN INVINCIBLE BRIGHT KNIGHT KNOWN AS

IRON MAN

TONY STARK IS LEARNING ABOUT HIS SECRET PAST THANKS TO THE GENOCIDALLY UTILITARIAN ANDROID RECORDER 451. AFTER BEING BETRAYED BY THE BOUNTY HUNTER DEATH'S HEAD, TONY HAS LEARNED THAT HIS OWN FATHER AND 451'S HISTORY IS INTERTWINED. DECADES AGO, HOWARD STARK TRAVELED THE EARTH LOOKING FOR A WAY TO SAVE HIS UNBORN CHILD AFTER LEARNING THAT THE CHILD WOULD NOT SURVIVE TO BIRTH. DESPERATE, HOWARD WAS TOLD THAT A MOB FAMILY OF ALIENS HAD 451 LOCKED UP AND THAT HE COULD HELP. ASSEMBLING A CRACK TEAM TO BREAK HIM OUT, HOWARD RESCUED 451. BUT THAT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY...

THE SECRET ORIGIN OF TONY STARK PART TWO

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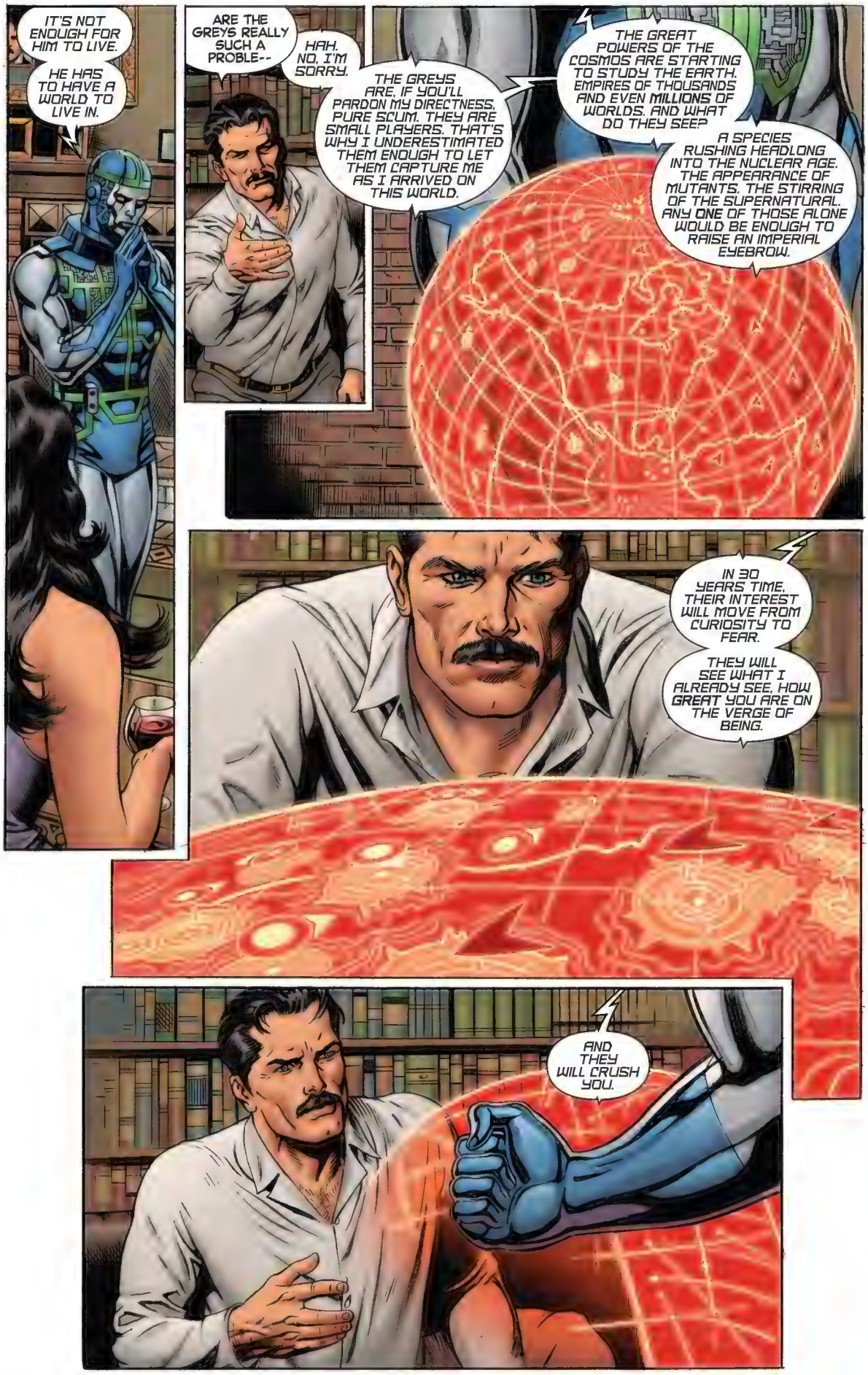
DEEP SPACE. IN TRANSIT TO DESTINATIONS UNKNOWN.
"HMM. THIS COULD BE TRICKY.
"LIKE EVERYTHING."
WHEN I CAME THIS WAY BEFORE, I WAS BY MYSELF. WITHOUT A SHIP. I COULD AVOID DETECTION.
HOWEVER, WITH YOU AND THE SHIP, EVEN WITH ITS CLOAK, WHATEVER REMAINS OF THE PERIMETER MAY ACTIVATE...
PERIMETER TO WHAT, 451?
AH...
"...THE PERIMETER DEFENSES SENSED US."

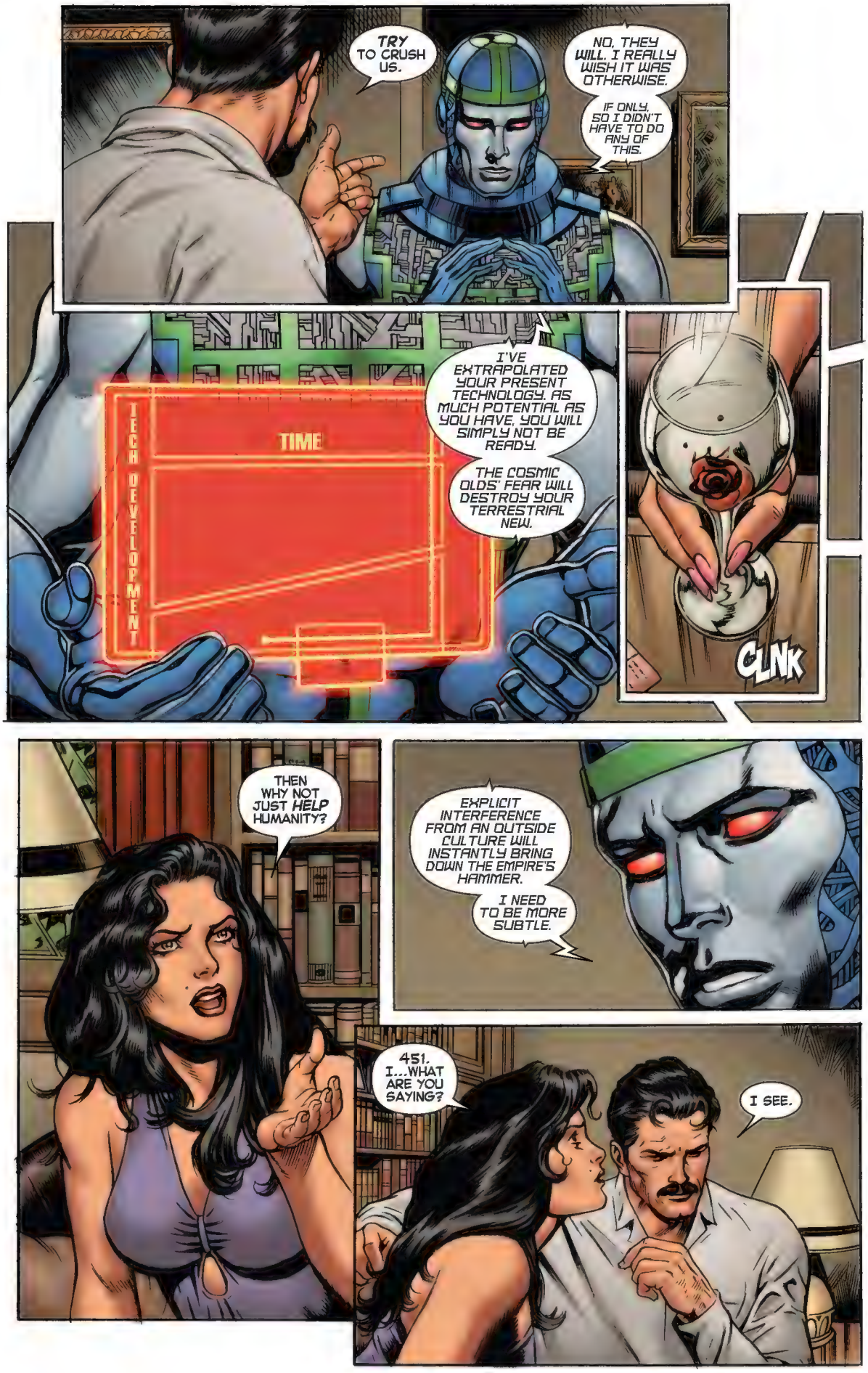
MR. STARK, COULD YOU SAVE OUR SHIP, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE?
I'LL BE VERY GRATEFUL.
GEE. NOW THAT'S A TEMPTING OFFER. I'LL HAVE TO TAKE IT UNDER CONSIDERATION.
I COULD REMOTE CONTROL THE ARMOR... BUT I'M NOT A FIGHTER.
BETTER THAT YOU ACT WITHIN THE SAFETY PERIMETERS I'VE SET. NO FIRING ON THE SHIP, NO RUNNING AWAY, ETCETERA, ETCETERA.
PLEASE.
DO YOU REALLY THINK I'M GOING TO ACTIVELY HELP YOU ACHIEVE WHATEVER PLAN YOUR GLORIFIED COMMODORE 64 OF A BRAIN HAS DREAMED UP?
IF I LET THEM KILL US, YOU FAIL.
I THINK YOU'RE ARROGANT ENOUGH TO BELIEVE YOU'LL MANAGE TO OUTWIT ME BEFORE ALL THIS IS OVER.
WHY THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY? IF MY PLAN'S SO INSANE, AND SO OBVIOUSLY BASED ON FALSE IDEAS, WHY WORRY ABOUT IT?
AND COMMODORE 64? HARSH.
AND IF I DIE, YOU'LL JUST USE YOUR PERSONAL STEALTH ANYWAY AND TRY AGAIN, RIGHT?
PLEASE, MR. STARK! DON'T UNDERESTIMATE YOUR IMPORTANCE! DECADES OF TOIL, DOWN THE COSMIC DRAIN!
BUT YES, THE WORK WOULD HAVE TO CONTINUE. I WOULD FIND A WAY...

"...AFTER EVERYTHING I'VE DONE, WHAT CHOICE DO I HAVE?"
DRONE INCOMING ON OUR SIX!
ER... P.E.P.P.E.R. TO TONY?
...TONY?
SIGH
C'MON! I CAN'T DO THIS ON MY OWN! 451'S LIMITS ARE GETTING IN THE WAY!
I CAN'T DO THIS BY MYSELF.
HEAD IN THE GAME!

SORRY, P.E.P.P.E.R.
DON'T BE SORRY!
BE IRON MAN!
PUNCHING AND SARCASM! PUNCHING AND SARCASM!
YOU KNOW HOW THIS GOES.
NOT IN THE MOOD FOR PEP, P.E.P.P.E.R.
451'S STORY. MY PARENTS. EVERYTHING.
IT JUST CAN'T BE TRUE.
YOU'RE NOT ENTIRELY A STUPID GUY, TONY. WE'LL WORK IT OUT.
JUST GET THROUGH THIS. DEAL?
SURE.
AR
AT LEAST IT'S A BETTER DEAL THAN THE ONE MY PARENTS MADE...

THE STARK COMPOUND. HALF A LIFETIME AGO.
SO... CAN YOU HELP...?
I CAN CURE YOUR SON'S CONDITION.
WITH MY HELP. HE'LL LIVE.
THANK GOD.
...SON?
BUT TO BE PERFECTLY CANDID? THERE ARE COMPLICATIONS.
WE HAVE TO REACH AN UNDERSTANDING TO MAKE IT WORTHWHILE.


IT'S NOT ENOUGH FOR HIM TO LIVE.
HE HAS TO HAVE A WORLD TO LIVE IN.
ARE THE GREYS REALLY SUCH A PROBLE--
HAH. NO. I'M SORRY.
THE GREYS ARE, IF YOU'LL PARDON MY DIRECTNESS, PURE SCUM. THEY ARE SMALL PLAYERS. THAT'S WHY I UNDERESTIMATED THEM ENOUGH TO LET THEM CAPTURE ME AS I ARRIVED ON THIS WORLD.
THE GREAT POWERS OF THE COSMOS ARE STARTING TO STUDY THE EARTH. EMPIRES OF THOUSANDS AND EVEN MILLIONS OF WORLDS. AND WHAT DO THEY SEE?
A SPECIES RUSHING HEADLONG INTO THE NUCLEAR AGE. THE APPEARANCE OF MUTANTS. THE STIRRING OF THE SUPERNATURAL. ANY ONE OF THOSE ALONE WOULD BE ENOUGH TO RAISE AN IMPERIAL EYEBROW.
IN 30 YEARS TIME, THEIR INTEREST WILL MOVE FROM CURIOSITY TO FEAR.
THEY WILL SEE WHAT I ALREADY SEE, HOW GREAT YOU ARE ON THE VERGE OF BEING.
AND THEY WILL CRUSH YOU.


TRY TO CRUSH US.
NO, THEY WILL. I REALLY WISH IT WAS OTHERWISE.
IF ONLY. SO I DIDN'T HAVE TO DO ANY OF THIS.
TECH DEVELOPMENT
TIME
I'VE EXTRAPOLATED YOUR PRESENT TECHNOLOGY. AS MUCH POTENTIAL AS YOU HAVE, YOU WILL SIMPLY NOT BE READY.
THE COSMIC OLDS' FEAR WILL DESTROY YOUR TERRESTRIAL NEW.
CLNK
THEN WHY NOT JUST HELP HUMANITY?
EXPLICIT INTERFERENCE FROM AN OUTSIDE CULTURE WILL INSTANTLY BRING DOWN THE EMPIRE'S HAMMER.
I NEED TO BE MORE SUBTLE.
451. I...WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
I SEE.

YOU WANT TO INSERT SOMEONE TO ACCELERATE OUR TECHNOLOGICAL GROWTH.
AS WELL AS SAVING OUR SON, YOU WANT TO...CHANGE HIM?
IF THERE WAS ANY OTHER CURE. IF...
DO NOT ACT LIKE THIS IS A BAD THING. YOU'RE A GENIUS, MR. STARK.
YOUR SON MUST BE AN EVEN GREATER ONE WITH A SPECIFIC MANDATE TO UPLIFT YOUR CIVILIZATION.
ALL PARENTS WANT WHAT IS BEST FOR THEIR CHILD. THAT'S WHAT I'M OFFERING.
FOR YOUR CHILD, AND ALL CHILDREN.

SO YOU SAY.
YET YOU'RE AS GOOD AS BLACKMAILING US.
IF YOU WERE HALF AS GOOD A GUY AS YOU CLAIM, YOU'D HELP WITHOUT ASKING FOR ANYTHING.
AND HOW CAN WE KNOW YOU'RE NOT PUTTING GOD KNOWS WHAT KIND OF ALIEN GLOOP INSIDE HIM?
I...I...
I'M SORRY. I'LL SHOW YOU EVERYTHING. ALL MY NOTES. EVERYTHING I DO. BUT YOU MUST UNDERSTAND OUR SITUATIONS ARE CLOSER THAN YOU COULD IMAGINE.
THE EARTH IS THE BEST HOPE FOR PEACE IN THE UNIVERSE. AS A PEOPLE, YOU COULD BE TRULY GREAT. FOR HUMANITY TO DIE PREMATURELY... UNTHINKABLE.
I CANNOT RISK THE EARTH.
WOULD YOU RISK YOUR SON?
THINK. MAKE YOUR DECISION.
WE SHOULD START IMMEDIATELY.

WE'RE IN.

LATER.
I'M SORRY.
I...HAD TO DO THIS. I WOULD PREFER TO HELP. THE UNIVERSE KNOWS, I WOULD MUCH RATHER JUST HELP.
BUT YOUR SON WILL BE GREAT. GREAT BEYOND MEASURE. IF YOU, HOWARD, ARE PHILIP OF MACEDON, HE WILL BE ALEXANDER...
WHO WOULDN'T WANT A SON LIKE THAT?
SO IF I'M READING THIS RIGHT, THIS STAGE IS...
YES. THE ALPHA PREPARATION. JUST AN INITIAL CHEMICAL TWEAK. THE OUTLINE SHOWS WHAT HAPPENS ACROSS THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.
I WILL BE AN EXTREMELY QUIET HOUSE-GUEST.
"HOUSEGUEST." OH NO. YOU CAN HAVE THE GARAGE.
ARE THERE ANY SIDE EFFECTS? MY MORNING SICKNESS...
WILL BE MINIMIZED. KREE-EMPIRE NAUSEA SUPPRESSION.
OH. AT LEAST THERE IS A SILVER LINING.
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

T-5 MONTHS

- ALPHA PREPARATION INCLUDING BASAL GENETIC LOOM CONSTRUCTION
- GENE DISORDER FIX (STAGE A)
- GENETIC LIBRARY OF REQUIRED TECHNOLOGICAL "FORMS" INTEGRATED INTO MITOCHONDRIAL GENOME

T-4 MONTHS

- GENE DISORDER SAFE-GUARD (STAGE B)
- GENERALIZED COGNITIVE ABILITY BOOST, WITHIN BOUNDARIES OF MOST SPECIES' MODELS FOR THEORETICAL MAXIMUM OF HOMO SAPIENS

T-3 MONTHS

- GENE DISORDER SAFE-GUARD REINFORCEMENT (STAGE C)
- INPUT SENSATION ENHANCEMENT (TENDENCY TOWARDS ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR PATTERNS IS ACCEPTABLE COST OF ADDED DRIVE/CURIOSITY CAN BE MINIMIZED WITH PROPER EDUCATION)
- NUMINOUS RESPONSE DOWNGRADE: LESS SENSE OF WONDER, INCREASED PRACTICALITY

T-2 MONTHS

- GENE DISORDER SECOND-ARY REINFORCEMENT (STAGE D)
- THE LEONARDO ASSEMBLY
- REGULATORS OF PREVIOUS ENHANCEMENTS

T-1 MONTHS

- GENE DISORDER FINAL REINFORCEMENT (STAGE E)
- GENERALIZED INSPIRATION
- FINAL GENERALIZED CORTEX ALIGNMENT, ETC, ETC

T-0 MONTHS

- BIRTH

SIX MONTHS LATER.
GIVE ME DRUGS!
451, YOU GOT SOME KIND OF...
...451?
THIS IS A BAD TIME TO HAVE A LITTLE THINK.
THEY'VE FOUND US.
YEAH, RIGHT UNDER OUR NOSES. OUTSIDE VEGAS. THE LEAD EVENTUALLY TURNED UP GOOD...
THE SITUATION? WELL, THE GIZMO HAS ONE TALL TALE FOR US, BOSS.

BLAM!
ZZAP
BOSS, THE ROBOT WAS MEDDLING WITH SOME KID--
...
I'M SORRY, MR. STARK. I'M SO SORRY.
TOO LATE.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? AFTER THIS, YOU LEAVE. EVERYTHING THEY WANT IS GONE.
EVERYTHING EXCEPT THE CHILD, MR. STARK.

IF THEY CAN'T TAKE THE TECHNOLOGY FROM ME, THEY'LL SEE WHAT THEY CAN LEARN FROM WHAT I USED ON HIM.

AS LONG AS THEY'RE AROUND, THEY'RE A THREAT TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

I UNDERSTAND.
CHK-CHK

NOW, DEEP SPACE.
EXCELLENT WORK.
COME BACK ABOARD, MR. STARK.
YOU REALLY ARE EVERYTHING I COULD HAVE HOPED.
WILL YOU QUIT WITH THE CREEPY UNCLE?
I STILL DON'T BELIEVE YOU.
I...
MR. STARK. THINK.
STOP DENYING AND THINK.

YOU'RE A GENIUS. YOU'VE KNOWN MANY GENIUSES.
THINK ABOUT THEM. THINK ABOUT HOW YOU AND THEY DIFFER.
WHAT SEPARATES YOU AND RICHARDS? YOU AND PYM? YOU AND T'CHALLA?
THEY ARE MEN OF GENIUS. MEN OF SCIENCE.
AND MEN OF PEACE.
YOU'RE PICKING YOUR FACTS, BANNER, DOOM...
...ARE THE CLOSEST. BANNER MADE A SINGLE WEAPON. DOOM INFLUENCES NO MORE THAN AN INSIGNIFICANT EUROPEAN NATION-STATE.
WHAT IS THAT COMPARED WITH YOU, THE MAN WHO IN A FEW SHORT YEARS ARMED YOUR GOVERNMENTS IN A WAY TO LET THEM STAND AGAINST THE FORCES OF THE STARS?
IMAGINE WHAT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF S.H.I.E.L.D. MET THE SKRULL INVASIONS WITHOUT YOUR WEAPONS.
YOU TALK LIKE I'M THE ONLY GUY WHO WORKED OUT HOW TO MAKE THINGS GO BOOM.
YOU WANT THE LIST? ROXXON. A.I.M...
TO LEAN A LITTLE SYCOPHANTIC. THEY ARE TO YOU AS A CANDLE IS TO A STAR.

YOU KNOW, COMPLIMENTS FROM A KILLER MACHINE LIKE YOU WON'T MAKE ME SIMPER.
IT'S THE SIMPLE TRUTH. THEY ONLY FOLLOW IN YOUR WAKE.
ALL THOSE WHO CLAIM TO HATE YOU WOULD SLASH THEIR OWN THROATS TO BE YOU, IF ONLY FOR A DAY. AND NONE CAN MATCH YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS.
WHY WOULD A MAN OF SUCH BRILLIANCE HAVE SUCH FASCINATION WITH ARMING HUMANITY?
YOU, MORE THAN ANY MAN ALIVE, MADE THE WORLD WHAT IT IS.
WHO COULD EVER THINK SUCH A MAN APPEARING AT SUCH AN ESSENTIAL TIME WAS A FORTUITOUS FLUKE?
PUT YOURSELF IN MY POSITION, ENGINEER.
GIVEN MY PROBLEM, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?
I'D MAKE SOMEONE A LOT LIKE ME.

OF COURSE. IT ALSO HAS TO BE TRUE.
FOR THE REASONS YOUR PARENTS WERE WORRIED ABOUT.
YOU PUT SOMETHING ELSE INSIDE ME.
OH, MR. STARK. I DON'T THINK YOU NEED TO BE A GENETICALLY ENGINEERED GENIUS TO GUESS THAT.
BUT THAT WAS FAR, FAR AHEAD. WE HAD TO SURVIVE THE BRUTAL PRESENT. YOUR FATHER AND I BOTH KNEW THAT.
SO HE RECORDED THE MESSAGE TO YOU, IN CASE HE DIDN'T MAKE IT BACK, AND WE DROVE TO VEGAS...
SO...WHAT HAPPENED?
"YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW?
"VERY WELL. BUT REMEMBER, MR. STARK. DO NOT JUDGE YOUR PARENTS TOO HARSHLY.
"ALL THE THINGS WE DID, WE DID FOR YOU..."
TO BE CONTINUED...

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